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Introducción de la Literacidad Crítica en la Enseñanza y Aprendizaje de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera en Educación Secundaria

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INTRODUCING CRITICAL LITERACY IN SECONDARY EDUCATION EFL TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

The following innovation proposal addresses the increasing awareness among English Language Teaching educators that Foreign Language Teaching cannot longer rely solely on linguistic knowledge and skills, but it needs to consider the development of high-order thinking skills, as much as the complexity of the sociocultural dimension and the Zeitgeist of Globalisation. This proposal includes Critical Literacy as an integral part of the English Curriculum for Secondary Education through a series of workshops that will endow the students with specific tools to interrogate texts by means of critical inquiry. It also argues in favour of a Critical Pedagogy that is implicit in the process and strives for real equal opportunities by reformulating discourses of power that maintain conditions of inequality. The teaching intervention would aim at students of 2nd year of Non-Compulsory Secondary Education and is meant to instil in them a critical language awareness that realises the active role language plays within our society, as much as in the pursue for social justice.

Resumen

El siguiente proyecto de innovación aborda la creciente toma de conciencia por parte de los profesores de inglés de que la enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera no puede limitarse exclusivamente al conocimiento lingüístico y las destrezas, sino que necesita considerar el desarrollo de las habilidades cognitivas de orden superior, tanto como la complejidad de la dimensión sociocultural y el espíritu de la globalización. Esta propuesta incluye la Literacidad Crítica como parte integral del currículo de inglés para Educación Secundaria que les suministrará una serie de herramientas para interrogar el texto a través del cuestionamiento crítico. También defiende los puntos de vista de la Pedagogía Crítica que está implícita en este proyecto y que lucha por una verdadera igualdad de oportunidades a través de la reformulación de aquellos discursos de poder que mantienen las condiciones de desigualdad. La intervención pedagógica se centra en alumnos de segundo de Bachillerato y está destinada a inculcar en ellos una conciencia crítica del idioma la cual advierte del papel activo que el idioma juega en nuestra sociedad, así como en la búsqueda de justicia social.

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The Rose that Grew from the Concrete

Did you hear about the rose that grew
from a crack in the concrete?
Proving nature's law is wrong it
learned to walk with out having feet.
Funny it seems, but by keeping its dreams,
it learned to breathe fresh air.
Long live the rose that grew from concrete
when no one else ever cared.

Tupac Shakur

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the importance of teaching Critical Literacy (CL) as part of the English as a Foreign Language Curriculum both to deepen language awareness and foster language acquisition while also working on their high-order thinking skills with context-sensitive contents that consider the students' lives, their contexts and problems and tries to engage them actively in the education process, opening new paths for practice as a means of empowerment and social action.

An innovation project for education is supposed to bring about changes or new features that improve one or several aspects of a specific practice (Fernández Navas & Alcaraz Salarirche, 2016). Namely, to detect a problem or a void in the teaching/learning practices that is relevant and will optimise the teaching/learning processes. The reasons to implement CL as a tool to improve the practices in of English as Foreign Language (EFL) teaching and learning are anchored in the long-supported belief that education should promote a better society of free-thinking, open-minded, creative individuals who would commit to the social struggle, a socially oriented pedagogical approach that can be found in the extensive literature on Critical Pedagogy (CP).

This CP approach to teaching and learning takes a philosophical and moral approach on education and it was first described by Paulo Freire (Freire, 1974, 2000; Freire & Macedo, 1987; Shor & Freire, 1987) and has since been developed by other theorists such a Giroux (Giroux, 1997, 2009), McLaren (P. McLaren, 1994, 1995) or Simon (Simon, 2014). Freire coined the *baking* concept of education, which is a form of oppression, since the education system he describes reduces the students as mere depositories or receivers of knowledge. A knowledge that is received, memorised, repeated and stored, but lacks the creativity and transformative power to emancipate the students and set their minds free (Freire, 2000).

This is the background against which CL will be used as a tool to teach English to the students attending 2nd year of Non-CSE (Bachillerato), an approach to language learning/teaching that uses a mixture of sociological and linguistic techniques drawn from the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Although

with different approaches within the field of CP, the theorists of these 'disciplines' share a contemporary Marxist, post-structuralist and deconstructionist view of criticism, in the line to what the Frankfurt School stablished as a sense of critique (Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard, 2013):

> 'Critique'…denotes reflection on a system of constraints which are humanly produced: distorting pressures to which individuals, or a group of individuals, or the human race as a whole, succumb in their process of self-formation (…).
>
> Criticism…is brought to bear on objects of experience whose 'objectivity' is called into question; criticism supposes that there is a degree of inbuilt deformity which masquerades as reality. It seeks to remove this distortion and thereby to make possible the liberation of what has been distorted. Hence it entails a conception of emancipation (Connerton, 1976, as cited in (Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard, 2013).

Therefore, to be critical means to engage in a process of reflection that assesses ideas, preconceptions and discourses forming a 'system of constrains' that has become invisible to us because of its normalisation. The idea is not so much to find a true reality and disregard others as biased, but to realise that reality is a human construct and that in the same way it has been built, it can also be rebuilt while looking for other possibilities or variables in the pursue of social justice and emancipation. Nevertheless, the fact that there is not a true reality does not mean that some interpretations or constructions of realities are fairer than others.

Literacy, on the other hand, it also is seen to enter the dialectics of power as the literate person is often synonymous of educated, civilised, well-bred, cultivated, etc. (Janks, 2009). Whereas the illiterate brings about the pejorative connotations of savage, uneducated, uncivilised and so on. CL and CP reject this idea of literacy assumed by the dominant literate cultures, as another form of domination used by the privileged sectors of society to point to a deficit or lack of intelligence inherited by those who did not have access to education. For CP, literacy is then a construct that transcends the mere mechanical process that helps us acquire the techniques to write and read, to be understood as a set of practices that can both empower or disempower people (Freire & Macedo, 1987). Hilary Janks also points at the term's complexity and contends that writing was

once the work of specialist and reding entrusted to priest, since “literacy has always been dictated by the development of technology” (2009).

The decision to use CL as a tool to improve the EFL teaching/learning practices has, thus, a twofold aim, one that is based on linguistic considerations and another one that considers EFL teaching and learning to go beyond what is purely linguistic. That is, EFL should address the communicative expressions of language for what they are, a social act in which voices are heard or silenced and identities are formed and negotiated through the relationships of power that emerge in any discourse, as all forms of discourse are ideologically laden.

In this paper it will be stablished the theoretical framework in connection to this project, followed by a teaching intervention designed for a class-group of students attending 2nd year of Non-CSE, that will serve as an example of the project’s implementation to bear the possibility of expanding its scope to earlier stages of CSE. Finally, this paper will consider the strengths and weaknesses of this innovation project, its feasibility and will reflect on the planning and design processes while considering the competences the writer has developed during this process.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

This project’s main goals are to implement CL, a pedagogic approach that draws form CDA techniques, in the curriculum of public education to: (1) Improve the students language skills and communicative competence by raising the students’ language awareness of how language in use works and its implications for the discourse; (2) Develop the students’ social critical skills through a critical reading, analysis, deconstruction and redesign of oral and written texts and discourses, as well as images, symbols and signs; (3) Make them aware of the common places and shared knowledge language and discourses have; (4) Challenge them in the pursue of a transformative redesign that improves their society; (5) Contribute to the social and educational capital by engaging the students in social action through the implementation of a CP that makes them aware both of their rights and responsibilities as students and members of their communities, promoting their self-confidence and agency through active democratic participation in their educational process as the main actors of this process.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section will cover the theoretical background that supports this project and the state of the arts of CP and CL within the field of EFL teaching and learning. Thus, this section aims to 1) give a contextualised position of each methodology on the basis of the social theories and philosophical schools of thought from which these methodologies drew their ideas, 2) offer the reader a literature review that yields an idea of the state of the art associated to these methodologies and 3) support the teaching intervention and innovation project with the latest research done on CP and CL that shows the implications teaching and learning EFL with these methodological approaches have.

3.1. Theoretical Background

This section is designed to present a brief outlook of the theoretical background behind the methodological approach of this project. The background comprises the Frankfurt School and its ideas on Critical Theory, which have proved seminal for the fields of social science and critical studies. Antonio Gramsci's (1918; 1999) social theories and his construct of 'hegemony' in relation to Paulo Freire's (2000) CP. And Michel Foucault's (1978; 1980; 1995) philosophical theory of power and discourse, which is present in the CDA and, consequently, in its pedagogic approach to teach CL.

3.1.1. The Frankfurt School and the Critical Theory

What links the theoretical background of this project could be tracked back to the birth of a school of thought led by several generations of German philosophers known as the Frankfurt School, whose line of philosophical thought was coined as Critical Theory (CT). CT rejected the previous scholarly traditions of theoretical knowledge, which defended that scientific knowledge should be grounded upon propositions based on self-evident truths and sought to transform the relationship between academic disciplines and their associated methodologies and academic knowledge and society (Charles, 2018). In the verification method positivists found the best explanatory account for the conditions of scientific knowledge by submitting the scientific truths to the empirical test, which the supporters of CT no longer accepted as the main form

for academic research (Corradetti, n.d.). CT distanced itself of what was regarded as naïve and narrow conceptions that considered knowledge as impartial, eternal and natural. The implications this had for critical scholarship were that research had to abandon its systematic intention, the break with traditional disciplinary boundaries and the promotion of a social conception of practice, overcoming the division between the academic research and social life processes and society (Charles, 2018, p. 989).

In the narrow sense, CT refers to this group of German philosophers who supported neo-Marxist materialism and Hegelian philosophical ideas that sought human emancipation from slavery (Bohman, 2016). In a broader sense, since CT aims to free humankind form *all* the circumstances where individuals are being enslaved, dominated or oppressed, this school of thought has developed into different theories according to the historical periods in which they have been applied and the corresponding forms of power and ideologies of domination (Bohman, 2016).

The problem CT makes explicit is the impossibility for the social scientist to give a satisfactory account based solely on the point of view of the participator/interpreter (first-person perspective) or the observer's point of view (third-person perspective). Similarly, critical social inquiry faces the dilemma of being neither purely moralistic, nor purely epistemic and overly cognitivist (Bohman, 2016). The consequences the partiality of perspective has on social inquiry is that practical knowledge is bound to take more than one form to grant a satisfactory account of these obscure intentional contexts for others, that is, rather than looking for the necessary, universal features needed for social scientific knowledge, CT focused on the interaction between the social inquirers and the other agents in the social sciences, in which a "second-person perspective" is also needed to complete "the know-how of a participant in dialogue or communication" (Bohman, 2016).

The Frankfurt School comprises several generations of philosophers and it is impossible for the scope of this paper to do justice to its complexity and the evolution of its critical social science. However, the features described above contain the dialectical tension implicit in CL between epistemic (explanatory) approaches and non-epistemic (interpretative) approaches to normative claims (Bohman, 2016), which is essential to understand the complexity involve in doing

a critical analysis of the discourse, which this project proposes to teach to the students through an adapted version of the CL approach.

3.1.2. Antonio Gramsci's influence on Paulo Freire and Critical Pedagogy

This section offers an overview on Antonio Gramsci's social theories and their connections with Paulo Freire's and other authors' (Giroux, 1997; P. McLaren, 1995) that pursue a critical approach to counteract Neoliberalism in the current educational landscape (Mayo, 2015, p. 112).

The first obvious link between Gramsci's and Freire's works is the marked Marxian thinking behind these author's ideology and their ideas on hegemony (Mayo, 2015, p. 115). In *Our Marx*, Gramsci makes explicit his adherence to Marxian materialism:

> An idea becomes real not because it is logically in conformity with pure truth, pure humanity (which exists only as a plan, as a general ethical goal of mankind), but because it finds in economic reality its justification, the instrument with which it can be carried out (Gramsci, 1918, p. 37).

Mayo also points out Gramsci's contributions to Marxist theory by "reinventing" or reformulating some of its concepts, as understanding revolution as a cultural practice (2015, p. 115). Gramsci makes a crucial conceptual distinction between 'domination' and 'hegemony'. Civil society (the private) and political society (the State) are the two major superstructural levels. Within these two levels hegemony is exercised by the dominant group through society whereas direct domination is exercised through the State and government (Gramsci, 1999, p. 145).

Similarly, Freire sees in the aid procured by the metropolitan society a form of their hegemony's consolidation, since he believes the thought behind this aid is as if metropolitan society were saying: "Let us carry out reforms before the people carry out a revolution" (Freire, 2000, p. 162). Although he recognises at the beginning of his book some Marxists may not agree with his theory, as they could find that even though denouncing a state of oppression, it gratifies the oppressor (Freire, 2000, p. 37), his very defection of the *radical* as a pragmatic man of action and the dialectical style in which this work written, do not leave any doubt about the Marxist's ideology behind Freire's words, even just by reading the title (Mayo, 2015, p. 116).

In terms of ideology, there are also contrasts, as Gramsci is very critical of folklore, dismissing much of the content of popular culture: “The scientific ideas the children learnt conflicted with the magical conception of the world and nature which they absorbed from an environment steeped in folklore” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 177) , blaming religion of this “magical conception” (1999, p. 626), which takes a different directions in Freire’s theory, who thought revolutionary leaders should take into account people’s worldviews and their traditions, beliefs, etc, as a form of cultural synthesis because “[f]or the revolutionary leaders, the knowledge of this totality is indispensable to their action as cultural synthesis” (2000, p. 182). Nevertheless, Freire’s concept of ‘consciousness’ connects with Gramsci’s distinction between ‘good sense’ and ‘common sense’ (Mayo, 2015, p. 117), as Freire also thought ideology was embedded in popular consciousness, since their identification with the oppressor did not allow them a “consciousness of themselves as persons or as members of an oppressed class” (Freire, 2000, p. 46). For Gramsci, the “healthy nucleus” of common sense was the good sense, which is the pragmatic part of common sense that needs to be developed (Gramsci, 1999, pp. 633–634). This transition from the common sense to the good sense is tantamount to Freire’s transition between this dominated consciousness to the awakening of the individual as an independent self-conscious being. Freire draws form Hegel’s philosophy, invoking the (unconscious) fear authentic freedom provokes in humans, who prefer the security of oppression to the risk of setting themselves free (Freire, 2000, p. 36). This way, subordinated groups can be persuaded, often below the level of consciousness, to consent to uneven relations of power and being oppressed, because of the fear of freedom that represents the unknown.

Finally, both Gramsci and Freire account for and vindicate human agency against fatalistic conceptions of history and they see hope in human agency and education, as the means for revolutionary action and transformation (Mayo, 2015, p. 17). Freire conceives the revolutionary act as an act of creation: “Consciously or unconsciously, the act of rebellion by the oppressed (an act which is always, or nearly always, as violent as the initial violence of the oppressors) can initiate love” (Freire, 2000, p. 56). In this search of human emancipation, both looked for answers in education, Gramsci in his search for a new intellectual paradigm that starts in the schools, since “[s]chool is the instrument through which intellectuals

of various levels are elaborated" (Gramsci, 1999, p. 143), and Freire by rejecting the alienating banking concept of education, "adopting instead a concept of women and men as conscious beings, and consciousness as consciousness intent upon the world" (Freire, 2000, p. 79).

3.1.3. Michel Foucault, discourse and power.

Foucault's work (Foucault, 1978, 1980, 1995) is largely concerned with relationships of power. A power that is normally possessed by institutions or groups of people, and in the interaction between these institutions or social structures and the individual is where these relationships of power acquire their full expression (Mills, 2003, p. 33). At the same time, Foucault reverses the epistemological terms of seeking for necessary truths in the contingent aspects of life and looks for what might be contingent in the apparently necessary (Gutting & Oksala, 2019). The following quotation gives a summary of this line of thought in his own words:

> It is one of my targets to show people that a lot of things that are a part of their landscape ─ that people think are universal ─ are the result of some very precise historical changes. All my analyses are against the idea of universal necessities in human existence. They show the arbitrariness of institutions and show which space of freedom we can still enjoy and how many changes can still be made (Foucault, 1988, p. 11).

Similarly, he tries to shed some light on those aspects of history that are normally not taken into account by philosophers and historians because they are not part of the major events of history, although he sceptically observed a change in this respect:

> But today, unlike the others, historians are becoming more willing to handle 'ignoble' materials. The emergence of this plebeian element in history dates back fifty years or more. This means that I have fewer problems about talking to historians (Foucault, 1980, p. 37).

Foucault's bottom-up model of power allows a representation of power that permeates all the relationships within a society, which yield a more nuanced account of how power operates on a mundane, routine basis and treats the individuals as agents who take an active part in submitting to or resisting that power (Mills, 2003, p. 34).

Rather than the utterance or the text produced, Foucault is interested in the set of rules governing the discourse that "lead to the distribution and circulation of certain utterances and statements" (Mills, 2003, pp. 53–54). In the rules governing discourse, Foucault also sees the tentacles of power setting the principles of exclusion, namely, what can be said and what cannot. Our society enacts different procedures of exclusion, the most evident and familiar to us, according to Foucault, is the forbidden (Foucault, 1992, p. 5). Basically, this means discourse is being regulated in so far as we know who can say everything, what cannot be said according to the circumstances, or that not everyone can say anything, so this creates taboos attached to the object of discussion and rituals attached to the circumstances (1992, p. 5). At the same time, there is another principle of exclusion, which is not a prohibition but a rejection, such as the case of reason versus madness (1992, p. 6). In this dialectical relationship between discourse and power, education plays a twofold role, since education is the tool in our society that gives us access to any form of discourse, but it is also maintains and modifies the appropriation of discourses, along with the knowledges and powers they bring along (Foucault, 1992, p. 27).

As it has been noted by Janks (2009, p. 50) and Mills (2003, pp. 54-55), Foucault moves away from Marxist theorising that regards discourse only as a negative force that is used for dominance, but he sees discourse as both oppressing and a form of resistance:

> We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it (Foucault, 1978, p. 101).

It must be also considered that Foucault does not equate discourse to language, nor can be assumed an straight forward relation to reality (Mills, 2003, p. 55). Discourse is rather a system which structures and technologies allow us the representation of reality. In his essay *The Order of the Discourse*, he describes how, during the XVI and XVII centuries (mostly in England), these technologies disseminated a certain will-to-know, a will-to-know that prescribed the technical level knowledge should have to be verifiable and useful (Foucault,

1992, p. 10). These techniques are an integral part of the discourse and they are structured in a particular way to dictate our will to find the truth, which Foucault considers a further system of exclusion which is institutionally supported by practices such pedagogy, the system of books, the libraries, etc, but foremost by the way we put knowledge into practice within a society in which knowledge is assessed, distributed, delivered and in certain ways attributed, namely, what counts as knowledge and what does not, and who has access to certain knowledge and who is deprived of it (Foucault, 1992, pp. 10–11).

Foucault's insightful theory of discourse has had a great impact in Critical Discourse Analysis and, consequently, in Critical Literacy, since the way he represents discourse as creating a 'reality' that is governed by a system of rules makes evident the relation discourse has with power and why discourse does not only say things but does things, acting in specific ways upon the world and how we know it.

The following section links the theoretical background with this project's pedagogical approaches, CP and CL, by giving an overview of the theoretical framework and the implications these approaches have both for education and EFL teaching and learning processes. In addition, the section will offer the state of the art on these approaches through a review of the current literature that is relevant to these critically-oriented pedagogical approaches.

3.2. State of the Art

This following section provides a review of the literature within the theoretical framework of CP and CL, as well as their past and current application in the field of EFL teaching and learning. Since CL can be considered as a pedagogical approach to the scholar field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), for the purpose of this paper, only the features of CDA that are relevant to do CL will be considered. This implies that, although CL uses techniques from CDA, this paper will only make references to CL as an umbrella term, since it would not help to make distinctions between the two of them when this project is meant to help the students become critically literate through the implementation of CL oriented sessions.

Besides, CL and CP share most of their pedagogic features and approaches, although the tools of CDA are not featured in CP and, thus, it has been included as a separate approach that naturally complements and its implicit in doing CL.

3.2.2. Critical Pedagogy State of the Art and its use in the EFL teaching.

The philosophical premises for applying critical pedagogies in the pursue of a fairer society are preceded by the assumption that the world is under the threat of a "neo-feudal worldview in which self-interest and the laws of the market [are] seen as the only true measure of politics" (Giroux, 2009, p. 2). That is, those who foster the necessity of applying a critical pedagogy see a fundamental injustice in the distribution of wealth and a pernicious discourse that tries to cover the uneven distribution of wealth and property as legitimate or the result of the efforts of a few, as if it were something everybody could profit from and everybody were able to reach on equal grounds.

The term CP is largely associated to the figure of Paulo Freire and his seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000), in which he coined the term 'banking' to conceptualise a type of education:

> In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. The teacher presents himself to his students as their necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance absolute, he justifies his own existence (Freire, 2000, p. 72).

According to Freire, education was structured in a hierarchical way that bestowed teachers as the only possible source of knowledge and diminished the students' capacity to create or find knowledge from within themselves. This alienating perspective of knowledge was already criticised by Dewey (2001), when he compared conservative and progressive forms of education and describes conservative education as follows:

> Education as Formation. We now come to a type of theory which denies the existence of faculties and emphasizes the unique role of subject matter in the development of mental and moral disposition. [...] Education proceeds by instruction taken in a strictly literal sense, a building into the mind from without (Dewey, 2001, p. 72).

As it can be seen, Freire's words echo those Dewey wrote some decades before. This gives us an idea that education has always been a place of struggle between different views on what means to educate and what is the role of the teacher as a knowledge transmitter. Perhaps, what Freire makes more explicit is that these different views about knowledge bring about social consequences, and to consider the students as passive subjects or recipients of knowledge means they are also being the subjects of oppressive system of domination. An oppression the students accept because they have been already enslaved through alienation (Freire, 2000). To fight this sectarianism, Freire argues we need radical women, radical men and radical teachers who enter a dialogue with the oppressed that leads them to a self-conscious process of transformation and emancipation, and with the oppressors that leads them to realisation of their wrong doing (2000, pp. 39-49).

CP still finds a powerful source of inspiration in Freire's works, but it has develop into a much broader array of causes as radical thinking has grown parallel to social movements over the decades and sites of oppression have become more visible and organised (Crookes, 2012). An overview of the literature on critical pedagogies offers a variety of social injustices that can be tackled such a gender and sexuality, multiculturality, race or social inequality (Crookes, 2012; P. McLaren, 1994; Norton & Darvin, 2015; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Simon, 2014). The reason for its broad approach reflects the extent and variety of issues in which people's lives are being marginalised and the access to equal opportunities is still a promise to be made tangible and real. As Norton points out, the plural of "pedagogies" suggests that pedagogy has many ways to be critical and many directions to which it can directs its criticisms (Norton & Darvin, 2015).

Similarly, the application of CP in this project finds its support in the necessity to teach the students what means to be socially conscious citizens within the field of EFL teaching. EFL teaching and learning is culturally and socially bonded, since language is used in social interaction and learning a language has a clear aim to interact with the world, a world that is multicultural and which forms of communication are rapidly changing with the advances in the ICTs.

CP has been associated with a progressist view of teaching, understood as a view that is critical to traditional education, has a different understanding of the conception of knowledge, a new understanding of human nature, pursues a

democratic education and the integral development of a person (Ooiwa-Yoshizawa, 2012). Although there is not a fixed method to apply CP, the implications a progressive view and the application of a CP within the curriculum of EFL are:

- The inclusion in the curriculum of issues that relate to social justice/injustice.
- The relation of the elements in the language curriculum with the issues the students face in their daily lives, dealing with problems they can apply to their real life.
- To improve their lives by becoming critically literate and use the tool of literacy to empower them and grant them access.
- To awake in them a socially conscious point of view that challenges uneven discourses of power.
- To create the basis for a democratic curriculum in which development students have a say.
- To encourage the students to produce their own learning materials.
- To implement a model that is dialogic where the teacher function is that of posing problems for the students to develop their critical skills (this can be done through what is called “codes”, which are pictures, images, songs, stories or other constructions that “codify” a theme of conflict) (Auerbach & Wallerstein, 2004, p. 18).

CP began to be implemented by L2 specialists in the late 1970s, but much more substantially after the mid-1990s (Crookes, 2012). Elsa Auerbach has been one of the most prominent adopters of Freire’s ideas. The two books created by Nina Wallerstein and Elsa Auerbach (Auerbach & Wallerstein, 1987, 2004) are a guide for teachers within the EFL field who are interested in engaging in critical reflection and social action and also a testimony of two professionals that have been teaching and working with this approach for more than 30 years (Auerbach & Wallerstein, 2004). In the following quote, they present their pedagogical approach based on an educational dialogue called “problem-posing”:

> Problem-posing assumes that education is not value-free but is embedded in a social context. Immigrants or community members bring to the classroom a richness of experience: their knowledge, their troubles, their strengths, and

> their skills. By inviting students and teachers to participate as co-learners, problem-posing enables students to shape their own learning, to think critically, and to make decisions outside the classroom that may set new directions for their lives (Auerbach & Wallerstein, 2004, p. 2).

Auerbach and Wallerstein state the premises of a CP that is pursued in this project such as the role the teacher plays in creating learning opportunities that encourage students to "believe in their capacities as critical thinkers and actors in their own lives" (2004, p. 2), the responsibility as educators to be constantly learning through self-reflection of our own practices, the awareness that education is political and that power and empowerment are central to the teaching/leaning processes, the teacher's need to be prepared for the paradoxes, dilemmas and questions this type of education may bring along with its application and accept they may not always be solvable (2004, p.2). Furthermore, the approach to language teaching this project proposes engages in this sort of problem-posing dialogue by applying the strategies used in Critical Literacy and the tools of Discourse Analysis (DA) to engage the students in the contradictions language and discourse present, as human acts of communication.

Crookes (Crookes, 2010) gives an outline of the historical inheritance and long trajectory critical pedagogies have within education and how they have progressively enter the EFL classrooms. Examples such as the one of Auerbach working with immigrants in the U.S. or Linda Crawford-Lange (Crawford-Lange & Lange, 1987), who was also pioneer in developing the critical approach within the EFL community give us different accounts of successful interventions and long trajectories teaching English that use strategies that "integrate language and culture learning; address the affective as well as the cognitive; consider culture as a changing variable rather than a static entity; exemplify that participants in the culture are authors of that culture; [and] relate to the native culture [of the students]" (Crawford-Lange & Lange, 1987, p. 258).

CP is very much alive in the current pedagogical research (see in-text quotations below) as a radical pedagogy of resistance and a philosophical a moral approach to education which participants are convinced that education needs to represent the social *Zeitgeist* by engaging in social action and resisting the attacks from the education policy makers on the educational institutions through policies such as president Bush administration's *No Childs Left Behind*

Act (ESEA, 2002), which covered its segregating purposes behind a name that is in itself legitimating the Act as, which kind of monster would want to leave their children behind? (Janks, 2009, p. 50), an example of how power discourses legitimate and perpetuate their actions at its best. Fortunately, although, as one may guessed, it has never been a mainstream approach, there are examples of radical pedagogies which resist to these attacks in field of research and in EFL teaching and learning practices (Bercaw & Stooksberry, 2004; Chan, 2016; Crookes, 2012; Izadinia, 2009; Mahmoudi, Khoshnood, & Babaei, 2014; P. L. McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Ohara, Saft, & Crookes, 2001; Paul, 2004; Santana-Williamson, 2000; Simon, 2014; White, Cooper, & Mackey, 2014). Although there are refreshing pragmatic examples of CP being applied in the classrooms of public education (Alegria, 2014; Morrell & Duncan-Andrade, 2008), it is also true that they are mostly exceptions. However, the example of Adelina Alegria studying the CP practices of Ms. Rodriguez in her high-school biology classroom, where she has achieved an environment that allows the students personal growth, their cognitive development and their critical understanding of a society ruled by uneven power relationships that has reshape the students' agency to change their own statuses. And Ernest Morrell's and Jeffrey M. R. Duncan-Andrade's example addressing the problems of urban schools and the hypocrisy behind the tolerance of the perpetual failure of urban school because of the "quasi-Darwinian belief system [supporting] that someone has to fail in school" (2008, p. 2). This paper will get back to Morrell's and Duncan-Andrade's case, but for now, it can be said that because of their exceptionality, these cases should serve as the basis for further action, as they constitute powerful accounts of change. CP's problem is not rooted in how farfetched it may sound to some of the teaching community, the tight schedule of the teachers or the need to change the theoretical approach to reach to a wider audience, but the lack of what Freire's called praxis: "They will not gain this liberation by chance but through the praxis of their quest for it, through their recognition of the necessity to fight for it" (2000, p. 45). Freire could not be righter on that point, because if CP fails to keep its focus on "[striving] for praxis: reflection and action of the social world in order to transform it" (Kaufman & Fobes, 2008, p. 27), it is completely missing its point, since its distinct feature, as Kaufman and Fobes point out, is that it is at the same time a form of practice and action (2008, p. 27).

If Duncan-Andrade and Morrell were successful in applying CP in different urban settings, was because they found where the problem of poor urban schools could be rooted and they got down to work while systematically investigating how their practices draw upon while extending the core tenets of CP (2008, p.ix).

This project's endeavour aims to apply this praxis within the context of Secondary Education in Spain, for which some material challenges have been considered, such as the difficulty of giving an entire course on the critical pedagogy of language teaching, an impediment that is also been observed by Crooke (2010, p. 9). This project proposes instead to do it in a series of workshops that would be spread once a week during the whole course, so, at the same time, there is time to implement the contents properly and do not feel the pressure to cut the theory and not give the option to the students to fully experience what is like to use a CP as a means for learning, which is an issue Crooke observes too (2010, p. 9).

Finally, the problem-posing technique that is used in CL is that of facing the students with the challenges of analysing the discourse and give them the tools to dig up what is beneath the surface of a text, which will be fully explain in the following section.

3.2.3. Critical Literacy State of the Art and its use in the EFL teaching.

The term *critical literacy* appeared in the 1980s and became more influential at the institutional level in the mid-1990s when the concept was applied in the classrooms of English-speaking countries and it drew the attention of the education community (Kuo, 2014). Colin Lankshear and Michele Knobel describe how literacy changed completely its status in English speaking countries over a few decades, from scarcely featuring in educational discourse prior to 1970s, to be at the forefront of educational policy (2011, pp. 3-4). During the years before the 1970s, the word 'literacy' was mainly used in non-formal educational settings as a juxtaposing relation to adults that were *illiterate*, since it was generally assumed that the students would master reading and writing well enough to perform in school and their professional lives (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011, pp. 3–4). However, by the end of the 1970s the situation regarding literacy's educational status changed drastically and it became the main point of policies, practices and research (2011, p. 4). Among numerous reasons, Lankshear and Knobel give five

they consider to be especially relevant: “1) Paulo Freire and the radical education movement; 2) the 1970s literacy crisis; 3) literacy, economic growth and social well-being; 4) literacy, accountability, efficiency and quality; 5) the growth of sociocultural theory” (2011, p. 4). Freire’s approach to non-formal literacy education granted him a respect among academics of developed countries such as North America and this provided the “theoretical underpinning for the development of critical pedagogy, including critical literacy, in the USA during the 1980s” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011, p. 5).

To describe what CL is, could be a good starting point to disentangle what is understood for critical and what is understood for literacy. However, this quote from Ira Shor (1999) does reference neither of them, though it comprises all the elements and features, goals and endeavours, of its ontology (how it came to be):

> We are what we say and do. The way we speak and are spoken to help shape us into the people we become. Through words and other actions, we build ourselves in a world that is building us. […] Yet, though language is fateful in teaching us what kind of people to become and what kind of society to make, discourse is not destiny. We can redefine ourselves and remake society, if we choose, through alternative rhetoric and dissident projects. This is where critical literacy begins, for questioning power relations, discourses, and identities in a world not yet finished, just, or humane (Shor, 1999, p. 2).

Shor’s words are incredibly insightful in describing the tension between the extent to what we are dependant on discourses to shape our identities and the possibilities of exercising our own free will and choose our own dissident paths, different paths where we can set ourselves free from those Foucauldian universal necessities that impede us from seeing the spaces of freedom we can still enjoy and the many changes that can yet be made. Similarly, he points out that “we are what we say and do”, suggesting that what we say does things and acts into the world, and, in turn, what we do says things of us. Saying in CL is tantamount of acting, since the discourses we throw into the world help create the possibilities that the world may or may not offer to us/others and, in turn, that world is going to shape what we are, although to what extent depends as well of our awareness of what kind of discourses are shaping us. In this endeavour that is life itself, CL leads our way to inquire into the reasons behind power relations, the humanity or lack thereof of our discourses and the crossing identities in transit our realities

(the realities we create for ourselves and others) allow us to enact. Finally, Shor points us that the world is still to be made and, in that making, it can always be more just and humane, because CL is, more than anything, a literacy of hope.

CL tries to resist and/or challenge the status quo by making a different reading of the word and the world, helping our way towards self and social development. And in this dialectical battle, in this transformative struggle, reformulating the world "connects the political and the personal, the public and the private, the global and the local, the economic and the pedagogical, for rethinking our lives and for promoting justice in place of inequity" (Shor, 1999, p. 2). CL tells the history of subjugated knowledge, being these two words (history and knowledge) that are essential to CL analysis. History is the maze of stories against which discourse can be seen articulated and articulating on a bigger scale. We also need to know history to understand how power operated before and how it operates today, where and how the discourses dissent and where and how they are perpetuating the same structures of oppression. How do racist, sexist, homophobic, hegemonic or enslaver discourses have evolved over time? By the same token, what kind of knowledge is valued in a society at a given historical moment, is probably going to tell us what kind of knowledge is not valued or undervalued, dismissed or forbidden. And that begs the question of how that knowledge is administered and who gets access or not to certain types of knowledge. These discourses change over time but there are traces of previous discourses and shared knowledge that withstand the passing of time, some remarkably so, and, although they disguise in different ways, they can always be found, some of them shattered or fighting to prevail and others as strong and powerful as a youngster who never ages. Or, can we honestly say, without a hint of remorse, that discourses that persuade us to see slavery as a natural cause of the natural order of the world have ended? What about white supremacist's discourse? And heteronormative or sexist discourses? Are not these discourses still alive and sophisticated enough to convince people of the most preposterous ideas without them even realising it? CL and any critical pedagogy that keeps up with the epithet of "critical" do think these discourses are still alive and, in many cases, enjoying an enviable health.

As Shirley Steinberg points out, critical pedagogies are not led “by liberal groupies or rayon-clad teachers who want to save needing students from pedagogies of prescription, administration, state standards, or even the latest flashdance pedagogical method” (2007, p. ix). As Steinberg (Steinberg, 2007) claims, critical pedagogies have the right to be angry at the injustices that blight people’s lives and to express anger at the violations of human rights. Furthermore, its aim is to teach the students to feel that anger, because they have the right to express that anger too, as this is not a destructive anger, but a healing one, an anger that is aimed at what is in fact destructive and destructing the world and people’s lives.

CL thus aims to give voice to those stories that go unheard, and for that purpose draws from techniques of CDA and critical social theory and its interest on issues of gender, race, class and ethnicity (Morgan, 2002, p. 1). CL literacy is based on the assumption that society is in a constant struggle, for the possession of wealth, knowledge (and hence power), access to material resources and technologies and hegemonic positions (Morgan, 2002). The issue at hand is that, in this struggle, the battle is rarely fought on equal conditions and those who have favoured conditions tend to defend their privileges and perpetuate them by creating a network of discourses, since “certain social groups have historically controlled the ideologies, institutions and practices of their society, thereby maintaining their dominant position” (Morgan, 2002, p. 1). However, because these discourses of domination are historically constructed, they can also be deconstructed and reformulated, and that is precisely what CL does with texts and discourses, deconstructing them and try to redesign them. CL is not just about seeing what is unfair and unmask it, but its ultimate purpose is to rebuild those discourses and rethink a better society.

Hilary Janks claims that “the ability to do critical literacy gives us potent ways of reading, seeing and acting in the world” (Janks, Dixon, Ferreira, Granville, & Newfield, 2013, p. 10). Janks also points out that many countries do not have a word for literacy as such (e.g. the German for literacy is *Kmmunicationsfähigkeit*, which can be translated as communicative ability or *Analphabetismus*, for illiteracy), and wonders why we need the word ‘literacy’ for (2009, p. 1). Then she goes on to reflect on the cultural and institutional character or literacy, being the patterns used to write cultural and its regulation institutional, as different

communities practise different forms of literacy (2009, p. 2). Further, whether the ability to read to read a text on a basic level, that is, decode the words in the text, is enough to regard a person as literate, could be also contested if the person can not make sense of the words s/he is reading because of lack of "background knowledge to bring to bear on the text" (Janks, 2009, p. 2). Therefore, Janks (2009) concedes that the binary position between literate and illiterate is not as clear cut as it might at first seem and can create further binaries that are more problematic because of its oppressive potential such as well-bred, educated, cultivated and so on (2009, p. 3). In this sense, language is what makes all of us human and what distinguish us from other living species on earth, but literacy has come to signify across history and different cultures what distinguishes one person from another, namely, it is widely believed that literate people are more intelligent and refined, and eventually that literacy is what freed humans from a 'primitive' state and make them 'civilised' (J. Gee, 2011, p. 50). However, Gee contends there are those who regard this view as a myth because there is little historical evidence to support this and where such evidence exists, is too mingled with other factors and the role literacy plays is always much more complex and contradictory (2011, pp. 50-51). More recent studies in neuro-science using brain imaging have yield results that reading creates brain pathways that do not exist before becoming literate (Janks, 2009, p. 3), but being beneficial for the brain's development does not always add to a person's intelligence or vice versa. What it has strong historical evidence is the fact that literacy is a by-product of technology, as the idea that ordinary people should learn to write and read was only attainable after the invention of the alphabet and the printed press and thus, literacy has always ran parallel to the advances in technology (Janks, 2009, p. 3). This argument makes problematic to take a stance that regards the representations of literacy as binary, because it opens the way for discourses of oppression, domination and segregation, as it can be argued (and it has been argued) that these differences are enough to grant or deny access to knowledge. In fact, this paper has overlooked at this problem while reflecting on Duncan-Andrade's and Morrell's work on urban school settings (2008).

Literacy is thus at the heart of the problem, since whether there is agreement or not upon what counts as literacy or as a literate person, the students need to be granted access, and that access is also institutionally set, and this paradoxical

issue begs the question of how can teachers grant their students access while teaching them the value of diversity? As Janks points out, “issues of access and diversity are tied to issues of power” (2009, p. 12).

Now, this paper will look at a series of features all critical literacies share to avoid inconsistencies by a careful disambiguation of the term and its implications. For this purpose, this paper stands with those models of CL that seek to incorporate different orientations to literacy (Cope & Kalantzis, 1999; Green, 2002; Janks, 2009; Luke, 2000, 2012; Rajalingam, 2015), as they are more helpful in the complexity implied in text’s or discourse’s deconstruction, or in Allen Luke’s words:

> Fortunately, no formula for ‘doing’ critical literacy in the classroom has emerged, and many have attempted to actively combat the distillation of critical literacy into a single step method, or a commodity for publishers. If anything, critical literacy education involves a theoretical and practical ‘attitude’ towards texts *and* the social world, and a commitment to the use of textual practices for social analysis and transformation (2000, p. 7).

One way of framing CL from this perspective would be that doing CL involves a theoretical and practical ‘attitude’, by ‘attitude’ Luke means a disposition for critical and constructive scepticism towards the text (Rajalingam, 2015) and, thus, the social world, and a commitment to use textual practices (e.g. CDA) for social analysis (e.g. critical social theory) and transformation (e.g. social action). Nevertheless, Luke sees a peril in CL, which must understand the relationship between representation (e.g. text, discourse, images) and reality (e.g. the world out there). Since, although a sum of representation can construct a ‘reality’, that is not say that ‘reality’ is the result of a sum of representations and thus, there is no factual, trustworthy or evidence that can support a worldview that matches what is out there (e.g. which representation the media gives while covering global warming have some degree of veracity).

Interestingly, it has been noted, among the theoretical research, “an increasing number of teacher-authored accounts describing CL practices in the classroom” (Lewison, Flint, Sluys, & Henkin, 2002, p. 382). Lewison et al. contend the narratives and research behind these accounts are genuinely impressive. This serves as an introductory passage to their study on newcomers and novices to the practices of CL and the challenges they have to face while applying an

approach to CL (2002). After reviewing a range of definitions, they synthesized the last 30 years of research and professional literature in the following four dimensions: "(1) *disrupting the commonplace*, (2) *interrogating multiple viewpoints*, (3) *focusing on sociopolitical issues*, and (4) *taking action and promoting social justice*" (Lewison et al., 2002, p. 382). As it can be seen, "disrupting the commonplace" and "interrogating multiple viewpoints" matches Luke's "attitude/disposition for critical constructive scepticism", there is also the "commitment for social analysis" in "focusing on socipolitical issues" and "taking action and promoting social justice" could be englobe in Luke's "transformation", although they seem to assume the "use of textual practice". Nevertheless, this research gives a detailed account of CL practices comprised in these four dimensions. These three dimensions lead to the path in which people transit from critical reflection to social awareness and, eventually, to social action.

In this study research, they followed two elementary teachers Nancy and Kevin, the former a newcomer and the latter a novice. The two teachers were successful in implementing several CL's dimensions. What was interesting is that there seemed to be a clear relationship between Nancy's increasing attempts to bring the students' own life stories to the classroom and the degree of engagement the children showed. At the same time, bringing books with narratives containing social issues clearly increased the children involvement (Lewison et al., 2002, p. 386). Nancy could experience how engaging in discussion with their students made them "go from the surface kind of stuff to getting into the content" (2002, p. 386). At the same time, she engaged with them in open conversations, sharing her concerns about standardised testing, to which the children react talking about being a four-start school and how their scores dropped (2002, p. 387). Regarding the different CL dimensions, Nancy's group did better at disrupting the commonplace, while Kevin's group seemed to naturally interrogate different viewpoints. The feedback the teachers gave about their experiences showed some concerns on Nancy's part about her wanting to be more prepared to make students think about what is fair and what is not in their lives, relating their viewpoint to some of the previous readings, and making them more aware of historical and sociological issues (2002, p. 390). Kevin admitted he wanted to address critical issues more straightforwardly and believed

that taking action develops over time, so he wanted to encourage students to focus on environmental issues.

This study is a good example of the kind of atmosphere CL can brings to the classroom by selecting materials that are meaningful for both the teachers and the students and the dialectical relationships this approach to teaching and life brings about that clearly changes the status quo of the relations of power between teachers and students, allowing a more honest, productive exchange of ideas by returning the students their agency and assuming the role of the teacher from a different stance, a stance that is not epistemically above the students, but with the students,

The researches and practices of CL within the EFL field are still not abundant, considering that part of these efforts are divided between the EFL and ESL fields, being the former the one which has received less attention (Ko, 2013, p. 17). Nonetheless, this paper will comment on both fields interchangeably, since after balancing the differences (e.g. how students of ESL need the language for practical purposes, while EFL students do not normally use the language in their daily lives), it has been considered that, in most cases, what is feasible in one of these two language learning environments could be also feasible in the other doing the pertinent changes to adapt the approach to the necessities and ecologies of the students.

Jennifer Alford works with CL within the ESL teaching field and she thinks it is essential for the ESL educators to engage the students with the text and create a pedagogy that reflects on their critical needs and capacities (Alford, 2001, p. 1). In her paper, she addresses the “elusive nexus” between promoting a critically literate development in their students and meeting the demands of ESL teaching in a secondary school. She first presents the version of CL they implement in Queensland high school, which involves investigating the ideological assumptions being made in the text with the corresponding representations of reality the text yields, critical literacy tools such as questioning i.e. Who is the target audience? How are the active/passive agents represented in the text? How is the reader positioned? etc. (2009, p. 2), or tools for lexical classification i.e. binaries, adjective choice, passive or active voice, etc. She points out to the importance of realising the language choice that gives a particular version and is positioning the reader, as well as the power of language to interact (do thigs) with

the world and the implications that has for the text production, where the text functions as a mode of action and a mode of representation. She inspires her choice in Fairclough's dimensions (1995, pp.132-133) to do discourse analysis by deconstructing the conditions of production and the conditions of interpretation, but she contends the curriculum of Queensland high school does not promote the total commitment of Fairclough's version to social action, and substitutes it with text explication (Alford, 2001, p. 3). The curriculum also offers examples of readers' positions, metaphors and those tropes that are more important because their meaning-making potential, to help the students to become resistant readers in a society that is saturated with texts that are designed to manipulate (2001, p. 3).

In the following section Alford gives us the reasons why CL is relevant to the ESL curriculum i.e. the student-centred approach, which at Queensland high school had a marked multicultural presence, given the affluence of ethnic minorities, whose interpretations help enrich the range of cultural representations. She also points at the inclusive value of CL that does not fall in the hypocrisy of cultural assimilation. Perhaps most importantly, the fact that students of L2 do not have the access to the powerful language they need to make sense of representations does not mean a deficit for CL approaches, but, on the contrary, the many voices and skills they bring to the classroom and the fact that they see the welcoming culture with new eyes makes them profit from what has been coined as 'hearer's advantage' (Wallace, 1995), which is the premise that ESL learners who come from other cultures are not biased by the mainstreamed discourses and representations because they do not know them. This is an example of an ESL feature that would play differently in an EFL classroom setting, since the students would not be surrounded by the host culture, but it should not make a big difference, provided the materials are selected to make the most of their learning opportunities.

Alford sees five areas (one has been taken out because of irrelevance for this project) that can be problematic while teaching L2 adolescent students with a CL approach (2002, p. 5).

1- Mainstreaming ESL learners: Alford points out to the fact that in the pursue of strengthening multiculturalism the students could end up being mainstreamed, as it happened in the mid-1980s when the state intervened

by putting all their efforts in covering the needs of the ESL learners, which brought the mainstream into the classrooms turning ‘inclusion’ into ‘assimilation’ (e.g. benchmarking students with the mainstream standards) (2002, p. 6).

2- Time issues: CL approaches are time consuming and need of a good amount of effort on the part of both the student and the teacher if a meaningful engagement with the text is supposed to happen. The participants need to engage with the text a number of times, both at a users and participant levels to really profit from their text analysis.
3- Submissive reading: Although CL approaches do not look for spurious rejections of the text or circumvented interpretations, but to thoughtful analysis that yield other possible representations, some people, because of their cultural background or their upbringing, may find it difficult or even taboo to adopt a certain type of cultural critique.
4- Background knowledge and choice of text: To analyse a text and make sense of its cultural representations the students need the background knowledge that is supporting the signs and symbols and other meaning conventions, unless we give free way to untethered representations. Nevertheless, the students need to give a fair amount of background knowledge if they are supposed to make sense of the analytical tools and even on the most basic level, to enjoy the analytical experience. This is the downside of the ‘hearer’s advantage’.

Drawing from Alford’s paper, the most pressing problems in the context of EFL students of Secondary Education would be those of the time and the background, since it would have to be tested whether one session a week is enough for the students to meaningfully engage with CL and the disposition or will they have to continue the work by doing small tasks during the week and giving some thoughts to the matter. Regarding the background, the teacher is responsible of scaffolding the process so there are no loose ends. Fairclough claims to do DA with a ‘critical’ goal the analyst needs to elucidate: “(i) how the orderliness of interactions depends upon taken-for-granted 'background knowledge' (BGK for short), and (ii) how BGK subsumes 'naturalized' ideological representations, i.e. ideological representations which come to be seen as nonideological 'common sense'” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 28).

Pessoa and Freitas throw some light on issues of power within the educational context and how teachers need to be vigilant not to exercise their power to silence other voices, no matter what our intentions are (Pessoa & Freitas, 2012). They start by asking themselves how they could live up to the spirit of postmodernism by deconstructing both dominant practices and counter-discourses (2012, p. 2).

They discuss an interesting construct around language education, suggesting that if language lessons often devote their time to trivial games or interactive shallow activities, that creates a discourse that places both culture and language education outside relationships of power, through a sort of trivialisation (2012, p. 3). This lack of depth around the discourse on language education it is also present in the idea that the best language learner is that one who codifies the language faster and transmits a message in the target language, which misses the point of its semiotic value and how we enact our personalities/identities through language. Or as Pennycook puts it:

> [I]t is not so much the form of the learner's utterances that are of central interest but rather questions of access and content. All things are not equal. The learner may already be positioned within a classist division that relegates second language speakers to a secondary status. What access does this language user have to particular uses of language, how might they be positioned, how might they become more aware of the ways in which they are discriminated against, and how then could they find ways to struggle against an inequitable system? (Pennycook, 2001, pp. 43–44).

As it has been noted, language does things and the consequences are also visible in the power linguistic majorities or official languages have over any other dialect or minority language. The reflections on the politics of representations and the view on language as a dialogic discourse, led the researchers of this paper to take a pragmatic approach to education, which points at the performative power of language, which goes beyond the mere description of objects to the execution of actions in the world (Pessoa & Freitas, 2012, p. 4).

They mention the lack of research on critical language practices and the necessity of more studies discussing CL applications. The project's main aim was to offer language courses to university students. They chose a range of topics that were socially laden and posed a series of problems and collected data for a

six months period. The qualitative data they gathered it is rather enlightening for teachers who would like to try doing CL (Pessoa & Freitas, 2012, pp. 8–9):

1) They found it was fundamental that the teacher had counter-hegemonic understanding of the issues to build a reflective environment and trigger questions related to justice and injustice (2012, p. 12).
2) The teacher developed a problem-posing strategy by asking provocative questions whenever the status quo went unquestioned or the answer were not elaborate to compel the students to reflect better but, at the same time, trying not to impose his thoughts.
3) His colleague researcher noticed his teaching practices were eventually becoming oppressive, as he put so much theory in that let no space for the students to build their knowledge, as he appeared as the expert voice. She also refers to his language "You always say: According to so-and-so…" (2012, p. 13).
4) The students developed an informed view of the themes because each theme was studied for 10 hours throughout the course of a month.
5) Through reflection on his colleague feedback, the teacher improved his attitude and corrected his oppressive practices by reformulating his provocative questions, which did also affect the attitude of the students' interventions that were quantitatively and qualitatively better (2012, p. 14).
6) The teacher should foster opportunities for the students to make connections with their own lives and bring their own stories to the class.

The results of this research gives an idea of the kind of teaching practices needed to do CL: a teacher who is informed about the issue of discussion and defends a counter-hegemonic view if none of the students does so; the need for problem-posing strategies that compel the students to reflect under the surface; a reflective teacher who is able to modify her/his practices whenever s/he detects s/he is enacting a discourse of dominance (e.g. epistemological oppression); doing CL the teacher needs to permanently engage with the students by trying to relate the issues discussed to their own lives and bring their voices to the front.

Upon looking at the literature on current practices doing CL in combination to EFL teaching and learning, there is a clear unanimity among the research community that there is very little evidence of the practices and more research needs to be conducted in order to support its trustworthiness (Alford, 2001;

Fajardo, 2015; Ibrahim, 2015; Ko, 2013; Kuo, 2014; Papadopoulos & Griva, 2017; Pessoa & Freitas, 2012; Zhang, 2015), especially in EFL teaching/learning (Ko, 2013), while Alford point out that more thoughtful research is needed in adolescents (Alford, 2001, p. 12). What most of these researches share is the observation that teaching English and working on the four skills is not enough and a well-rounded formation of the students by becoming critically literate is needed. It is not so clear though, whether the idea of a CL has the same meaning across the researches as, while some powerful accounts have been laid, there are other researches that, after having introduced the terminology supported by their preferred authors, develop a series of activities in which the relevance of CL seems to be reduce to a sort of self-explanatory condition by which the students develop their critical engagement guided by the power of critique itself. Nevertheless, most of these researches are serious an honest accounts of good teaching practices and, finally, there are courageous and powerful accounts of transformation as that of Arman Abednia and Mahsa Izadinia (Abednia & Izadinia, 2013), whose brief account presents a fleshed out story in which CL seems to fall into place, resisting at the centre of struggle, showing all its shades. Or Ducan-Andrade and Marrell work (Morrell & Duncan-Andrade, 2008, pp. 15–16) in East Bay High School, a comprehensive school of Oakland, pursuing academic achievement, identity development and civic engagement. They work with young people the State has condemn to failure and, although they can, they do not need to give an account of CP, because they are doing CP. They watered the roses that grew from the concrete.[1]

4. TEACHING INTERVENTION PROPOSAL

The following innovative teaching intervention aims to aid the students to think reflectively, analytically and critically by giving them an array of tools taken from the field of Critical Discourse Analysis and the philosophical and sociological approach that steams from Critical Literacy (CL). This innovative proposal for a teaching intervention is designed to teach a group of students of 2nd year of Non-Compulsory Secondary Education through a workshop divided into 26 sessions of 50 minutes each. CL is not completely new to the field of EFL

[1] The Rose That Grew From Concrete - Poem by Tupac Shakur.

teaching/learning, but it has not been tried with students of Secondary Education in Spain within the institutional framework and, consequently, the teaching intervention would test its feasibility within this framework.

As an example of how the CL strategies would be applied with students attending 2nd year of Non-CSE, 8 of the 26 sessions will be presented for the reader to have enough details of its possible implementations according to the educational stage and the methodology, strategies or techniques that support this language teaching/learning approach. To give the reader a more rounded idea of the implications derived from the methodology, the topic used in most of the sessions will be 'education', as CL is best implemented in connection with the philosophy of Critical Pedagogy (CP) that supports these practices. The topic has been deliberately chosen to allow students a critical reflection on education.

To put educations and the agents involved at the centre of the critical analysis is supposed to be both more meaningful and context-sensitive for the students. It also allows their voices to be heard on a matter where they are the main agents but are rarely listen to. The teaching intervention shares the point of view of CL approaches on social justice and inequality, which assumes teaching literacy cannot longer solely rely on teaching the skills needed to read and write, but they have to learn to critically read the word to understand the world (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Janks, 2009).

4.1. Methodology

This methodological approach is taken from the fields of CDA (Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard, 2013; J. P. Gee, 2010) and CL (Janks, 2009; Janks et al., 2013; McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004), from which this project has drawn its strategies and techniques mostly from Hilary Janks (2009;2013), her *Synthesis Model of Critical Literacy* (Janks, 2009, p. 26), *Thompson's Modes of Operation of Ideology* (Janks, 2009, p. 40), *Key Linguistic Features for the Analysis of the Text* (Janks, 2009, pp. 74-76) and James Paul Gee *Toolkit for Discourse Analysis* (Gee, 2010).

The methodology will use both inquiry-based strategies from CL and problem-posing strategies from CP. The methodology aims at (1 *disrupting the commonplace*, (2 *interrogating multiple viewpoints*, (3) *focusing on socio-political*

issues, and (4) *taking action and promoting social justice* (Lewison et al., 2002, p. 382).

The methodology tries to give the students the tools to: challenge the text whenever an assumption is being made; doubt when something is presented as an unquestionable truth; look for binary positions and if they are used to justify or support the argument; question any assumption that is made and do not take anything for granted. The student must remember that texts are never neutral.

Interrogating multiple viewpoints means CL is supposed to make students question their own positions, since they come with their own set of assumptions that are going to predetermine which kind of arguments they are likely to "buy into" and which would be the object of suspicions. The students should be made aware of their own biased assumptions by training them to reflect on their own system of beliefs. To be able to question our own and other people's assumptions, the students need to become *resistant* readers and listeners who are able to read/listen both *with* and *against* the text (J. P. Gee, 2010, pp. 19–22; Janks, 2009, p. 72).

It is important that the students understand that analysing language in use as a social construct implies that language and discourses are modes of action, namely, they do not just say things but do things (Fairclough, 1995; J. P. Gee, 2010, p. 131). The students have to be made aware that these modes of action (text and discourse) are historically and socially situated and they are both socially shaped and socially shaping, or *constitutive*. Fairclough argues that DA needs to "explore the tension between these two sides of language use" (1995, p. 131). Fairclough proposes a model with a three dimensional conception of discourse: 1) text analysis (description), which focuses on language use as the object of analysis and covers all the texts' forms (e.g. written, oral, visual); 2) processing analysis (interpretation), which focuses on how the text is produced and received; 3) social analysis (explanation), which focuses on the socio-historical and contextual conditions under which the text is produced and how they inform these processes, establishing a system of beliefs, values and knowledge that materialises in ideas of truth and falsehood (Fairclough, 1995, p. 97).

CL would be implemented with a Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach, since they would be taught the contents, concepts, techniques,

procedures and general corpus of knowledge they need to get an introduction on the field of discourse analysis, as it happens in any other subject. Therefore, CL would be at the centre of the workshop, although it happens that the focus of this learning approach is on language use, and so the students would engage in language analysis from a different point of view than that taught during their regular English sessions.

A thoughtful scaffolding is needed to introduce the students to a field that is new to them. According to Donna Lee Fields, scaffolding is a powerful tool because it helps the students to reach beyond what they would be capable of on their own and develops their confidence, competencies and ability to learn autonomously (Fields, 2017). This teaching intervention has considered the advantages of scaffolding the process and progressively allowing them more autonomy once the aid is no longer needed. Scaffolding is also consistent with Vygotsky's theory of development (Daniels, 2007), where he states that instruction is only useful when it moves ahead of development and the student is able to relate what is already known with new concepts in what he called the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

By teaching the students to be critically literate, this innovative proposal follows an action-based approach which is student-centred, in line with the pedagogies described in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001), helping the students become plurilingual and develop interculturality, since the intervention aims to raise their cultural awareness by considering their own and others' worldviews in a socially committed way.

Finally, the students would be asked to keep track of their learning outcomes by writing a reflective journal that would also serve them as a self-assessment tool. They could choose the format of their liking (e.g. Edublogs, Wordpress, OneNote, Google Sites, etc.) provided it is accessible for the teacher's view.

4.1.1. Rationale behind time distribution and sequencing of contents

The workshop would run parallel to the English subject, taking place once a week for the whole duration of the academic course. 26 sessions have been stablished to consider the periods in which the students have the exams, in which the CL sessions would be suspended and take over by the regular English sessions. Ideally, the sessions would be scheduled on the last day of the week,

as this could work as a motivating factor that changes the week routine and the teacher could take into account what it has been done during the week.

The contents have been sequenced considering a logical relationship between concepts and techniques, namely, which concepts need to be presented first in order to understand other concepts that are more specific.

4.2. General/specific objectives and the key competencies implied in the innovation proposal.

This innovation proposal considers the legal framework established by the National Curriculum BOE (Royal Decree 1105/2014, on the 26th of December, for Basic Curriculum for CSE (ESO) and Non-CSE (Bachillerato)) and the Curriculum of the Autonomous Community of La Rioja BOR (Decree 21/2015, on the 26th 0f June, for the Curriculum of the Autonomous Community of La Rioja for Non-CSE (Bachillerato)). Besides, the teaching intervention has its own specific objectives and learning outcomes, as it happens with the assessment criteria, since the addition of innovative contents needs the corresponding goals and assessment criteria that are adapted to its specific characteristics.

4.2.1. General objectives for the stage that are present in this innovation proposal.

This teaching intervention, in line with the RD 1105/2014, contributes to enabling students to:

a) Exercise their democratic rights and obligations as citizens, from a global outlook, and ─ inspired by the Spanish Constitution and by Human Rights ─ develops civic awareness which fosters co-responsibility in the building up of a fairer, more equable and sustainable society.
b) Become more personally and socially mature in order to act with responsibility and autonomy and to develop their critical skills. Foresee and peacefully solve personal, family and social conflicts.
c) Foster effective equal rights and opportunities between men and women, critically analyse and assess existing inequalities and promote true equality and non-discrimination against people with disabilities.

d) Strengthen reading, study and discipline as essential conditions to take effective advantage of the learning process, and as a means of personal development.
e) Express themselves fluently and accurately in one or more foreign languages.
f) Make an efficient and responsible use of the Information and Communication Technologies.
g) Learn about and critically value contemporary world situations, their historical background and the main factors in their development. Contribute towards the development and improvement of their social environment.
h) Enhance the entrepreneurial spirit through creativity, flexibility, initiative, teamwork, self-confidence and a critical sense.

4.2.2 Specific objectives of the teaching intervention.

This teaching intervention specific contributions aid enabling students to:

i) Deepen their knowledge and awareness of the target language, which, in turn, will improve their language accuracy and enhance their production.
j) Understand how sentence and text structure, lexical choice, passive or active voice choice, as well as other linguistic aspects, interact with the meaning of the text and affect/influence the reception of it.
k) Understand that any oral, written or visual text that has an intention is ideologically laden on the part of the transmitter, and it will be received with an equally ideologically laden point of view on the part of the receptor.
l) Develop a critical literacy by analysing the text at various levels i.e. language use, text's form, intention, socio-historical context, etc., and design/re-design the text i.e. recognise the different sings and symbols that support or constrain meaning-making in a socio-historically located and contextualised communicative act and be able to engage in a transformation process to create other possible meanings.
m) Use the tools of Critical Literacy to detect, classify and analyse patterns that occur in a given discourse, since those patterns and not the isolated incidence are the main source of information for Critical Discourse Analysis.

n) Reflect critically on their position as students, individuals and members of a community/society and compare it with other people's positions to be able to form a socially committed view in terms of power relations, diversity, access and design.
o) Understand and respect other people's point of view without giving up their own and defend it without trying to crash or manipulate their opponent but, instead, by using logical argumentation and reasons based on social justice.
p) Learn and apply the techniques used by Critical Literacy to critically analyse discourses and develop an inquisitive eye for hidden discourses of power that privilege the interest of the few over the social well-being of the many.
q) Embrace diversity and multiculturalism as a source of creativity and emancipation by engaging in the ever-changing dynamics of identity formation in the postmodern society of Globalisation.

4.2.2. Key Competencies.

The teaching intervention aims to develop the students' competencies as stated by the LOMCE (Organic Act 8/2013, on the 9th of December, for the Improvement of the Quality of Education).

Linguistic communication (C1)

The linguistic competence will be fully developed in this teaching intervention, since the knowledge and techniques students should acquire learning to be critically literate would improve their language awareness in both their target and native languages. This teaching intervention does not consider the processes involved in learning a foreign language as separate processes between L1 and L2, but as processes that are cohesive and dialectically interact with each other as a source of enrichment and identity formation of a plurilingual, multicultural individual.

Related objectives: All the objectives described above will be consecutively covered in the competence of Linguistic communication.

Digital competence (C2)

The use of the Information and Communication Technologies plays a central role in Critical Literacy and Critical Pedagogy, as it has completely changed the

paradigms of communication and, thus, both discourses and identities are more fluid, fragmented, complex and in constant redefinition. To keep track of these changes is one of the concerns of Discourse Analysis and this teaching intervention would help students to be critical while searching or surfing on the Internet, as well as making the right connections to show the students a civic and socially committed use of the ICTs can also correlate with a more profitable use.

Related objectives: b), d), e), f), g), h), i), j), k), l), m), o), p) and q).

Learning to learn (C3)

Giving the complexity of doing Discourse Analysis (DA), CDA compels those who practise it to select the methods, techniques and theories meticulously and be very precise when they use them. By teaching the students of Secondary Education some of these techniques through CL, the workshop aims to show them the challenges being a quality critical analyst poses and the degree of discipline that is needed to produce a sound critical analysis. Besides, its interdisciplinary character and inquiry-based strategies call for individuals that are curiously inquisitive, nonconformist and search for questions rather than answers, because they are aware that reality has many faces and interpretations and there is not such a thing as an unquestionable truth. The characteristics of a good critical analyst define, somehow, the qualities a good learner needs to develop.

Related objectives: d), e), f), g), h), i), j), k), l), m), n), o), p) and q).

Social and citizenship competence (C4)

The aim of teaching Critical Literacy is inextricably linked with its social purpose and to be critical means to be socially committed with those who need that commitment because their rights are being neglected, threatened or their voices are not heard. This means not only being good citizens but also being accountable, responsible and committed with the social causes of other fellow citizens and everything that threatens the well-being and peaceful coexistence of society or makes an abusive use of people and natural resources. Therefore, this competence together with the linguistic communication are at the core of this innovation project.

Related objectives: All the objectives described above will be consecutively covered in the Social and citizenship competence.

Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship (C5)

To be socially committed should be accompanied by a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, even though these attitudes have grown in different directions. However, an entrepreneur who succeeds and use her/his success to reproduce unequal relations of power should not be regarded by society as a winner, since s/he has lost her/his values and humanity along the way. By the same token, a socially committed person that has no sense of initiative and entrepreneurship has little value to the class struggle, since being critical does not mean to be able to see the injustice and do nothing about it, but to be creative to come up with new paths for action and be flexible to endure setbacks of adopting a stance that does not conform to the system norms whenever they betray the social contract we morally owe to each other. The students would be, thus, encouraged to take a stance which implies not only finding the source of the problem, but also coming up with solutions or courses of action, as a critical analysis that lacks transformative power is missing the point of being critical in the first place.

Related objectives: b), c), f), g), h), j), k), n), o), p) and q).

Cultural and artistic awareness and expression (C6)

Cultural and artistic expressions have the power of transformation and the appreciation of this expressions makes the transformation possible. Either explicitly or implicitly the aesthetic power of art has a moral dimension and creative expressions are sometimes the best way to fight social injustice, since works of fiction can be more enlightening and conscious awakening than reality, where reality turns too evasive. Culture and art are also a human heritage without which would seem impossible to understand the world around us. Therefore, the more creativity we bring to Critical Literacy and the more cultivated we are, the better the results the critical analysis of the discourse will yield.

Related objectives: c), d), e), f), g), h), i), j), k), l), p) and q).

4.3. Contents and assessment criteria

In this intervention students would have the power to decide on aspects such as content and assessment criteria with the responsibility this emancipation implies. The teacher would have designed the curriculum programme for the whole duration of the workshop, but students' ideas would be heard and apply whenever is possible. Possibilities for the students to relate the acquisition of knowledge to their own previous knowledge, experiences and present lives must

be promoted. The aim is to treat them as intellectually capable of making their own choices, to make them explore their agencies and their potential.

The same parameters would apply for the assessment criteria, which would consider their different learning styles and not only what they have learnt, but also what they bring to the class, to make sure their efforts and achievements are always praised. The assessment would maintain its formative, continuous and inclusive features, following the National Curriculum, but it would not have a summative character, that is, they would receive constant feedback (e.g. rubrics) during the course, but all feedback would be qualitative. However, if the students find this approach problematic, they could expose their concerns and give other possible options to change the assessment criteria. Besides, self-assessment and peer-assessment would also be used to get different points of view and train their reflective skills and their awareness of their own learning processes. The idea is for the students to work under different conditions and find out whether they take full responsibility of their power to decide or, on the contrary, they resist to make such decisions in favour of what they already know.

For any other consideration I urge the reader to consult the Curriculum of the Autonomous Community of La Rioja Decree 21/2015, which establishes the contents, assessment criteria and learning standards for assessment of Non-CSE.

4.3 Implementation of the Teaching Intervention

"Positioning, Education, Access & Identity"[2]

The teacher would be expected to familiarise her/him/self with the theory and tool s/he would introduce the students with. At the beginning of each session that has new theoretical content, these contents would be presented at the beginning, referring the reader to the exact theory and/or tools and the book pages where they can be found. The reader can find an example in Session 1 below

Session 1 – Positioning the word and positioning the world

Contents 1. The students would be introduced to the following contents:

[2] Because of its sample character, the reader will notice CL won't be introduce to the students and the relationship between Discourse and Power is assumed to have been already presented.

Text are partial/ Texts are not neutral in *Doing Critical Literacy: Texts and Activities for Students and Teachers* (Janks et al., 2013, pp. 10–11);

Positioning/ Position of writers and readers-Language constructs reality (Janks et al., 2013, p. 19). See also *Literacy and Power* (Janks, 2009, p. 61).

Connection Steams: i.e. This reminds me of… I remember an experience… (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004, p. 42).

Critical analysts often use spatial metaphors to describe discourses such as 'locations', places that we 'inhabit' or 'positioning' and 'positioned'(Janks, 2009, p. 71). Words describing spatial relationships have a great explanatory power when doing CL because they can stablish the relation and distance between two things at many levels (e.g. from which physical position a person is observing/describing an event; how we position ourselves ideologically and how our discourse positions others; how our position in the world, our nationality, etc., affect our worldview), all of them being relevant to do discourse analysis. During this session the students would be presented with the dialectical relationship between language and position and how it relates to the partiality of all texts.

Activity 1 – Positioning the world[3]

The students would be presented with a different cartographic version of the world map created by Australian Stuart McArthur in 1979 (Danforth, 2014), which represents the North up and the South down, manifesting the arbitrariness of our current cartographic convention. The idea is that the students understand how things that we take for granted could have been and had been otherwise at other times in history i.e. charts in the 15th century still had the east up, following the European tradition, while others preferred to put the south up, following the Arab tradition (Danforth, 2014).

The students would be asked to look at McArthur's corrective map and discuss in pairs the following questions:

- Do you know how the south ended up being down on the map and the North being up? Is there any logical reason for this cartographic choice?
- What do you think was Stuart McArthur's reason to invert the cartographic convention?

[3] This activity is inspired in another one that I found in the book 'Doing Critical Literacy: Texts and Activities for Students and Teachers' (Janks, Dixon, Ferreira, Granville, & Newfield, 2013), although I have changed the materials and created my own questions.

- Do you see this cartographic version as less accurate than the one in use? Why?
- Can you think of other examples of things we take for granted that could have ended up in a way other than what we know today? Can you relate this to your own experiences? How does your geographical position affect your worldview? Do you think your geographical position as an advantage or a disadvantage? Why?
- The author entitled his map “Australia: No Longer Down Under” (Danforth, 2014). How it would have been different if the revindication had come from a Latin American or African country?
- Discuss the quote below with your partner. What is the author implicitly saying? What is at play in the two different literacies (ways of reading) of the two different cultures? How does it relate to literacy in a broader sense (comprising the interpretations we do of the world and how we understand the world around us), access and forms of domination?

For Americans, it’s easy to think that our position, at the top-left of most maps, is the intrinsically preferable one; it certainly seems that way if you happen to be from a culture that reads from left to right. But it’s unclear why Arabs or Israelis, who read from right to left, would necessarily think so (Danforth, 2014).

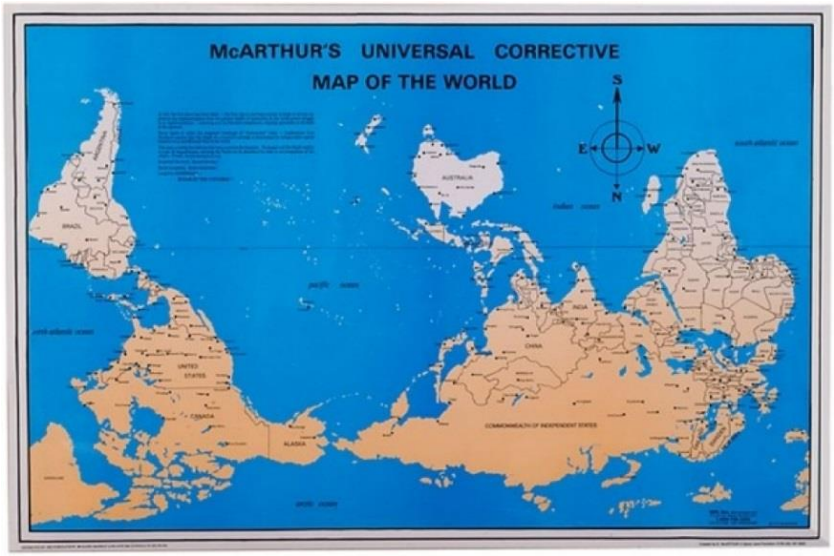

Figure 1 McArthur's Corrective Map (1979). Flickr

Activity 2 – The geography of knowledge

The student would be asked to think about North and South. They would be divided into four medium size groups and asked to write in one column ideas they

associate with the North and in the other column ideas they associate with the South. After, the students would be asked to underline those ideas they consider that provide factual information (e.g. information they have come to know from a source they consider reliable) and choose two (North and South) among those they have underlined, to develop two small texts explaining what is the source of information and expanding on the topic. They would swap their texts with the other groups, so each group has two pieces of writing from another.

In the groups, the students would answer the following questions to analyse and reflect on their classmates' writings:

- How are South and North positioned in the texts by their authors? Is there any difference between South and North? If yes, in which way are North and South positioned differently?
- According to what the authors have decided to include, can you find something that is missing in each text? Can you spot a position that is benefited/marginalised?
- Apart from the assigned North/South pattern, can you find examples of other binary patterns? E.g. feminine/masculine, black/white, rich/poor, developed/undeveloped, etc.
- Are there any adjectives or adverbs in the texts describing things or actions? If yes, make a list from both texts and compare the choices made for North and South.

At the end of the session they would be provided with questions and Connection Steams (see Contents above) to answer or fill in their journals e.g. What have I learnt that was completely new to me? What have I learnt in connection to something I already knew? I found shocking that… I did not fully understand… (Something)/That reminded me of…

Session 2 – Redesigning Positions

Contents 2. The students would be introduced to the following contents:

Key Linguistic Features for Analysis of the Text 1 the reader can find both the following three and the rest of linguistic features in (Janks, 2009, p.74).

- **Active voice / Passive Voice**.
- **Mood:** i.e. Statement; Question, see also (Janks et al., 2013, p. 75).
- **Modality – Degrees of uncertainty**.

Janks' Synthesis Model for Critical Literacy:

Design in (Janks et al., 2013, pp.15-16), and see also (Janks, 2009, p. 170).

Redesign in (Janks et al., 2013, p. 6; pp. 151-152).

This session would start with the analysis of the text they created. The idea is to create meaningful knowledge by creating a mind map with the concepts examined in the last session.

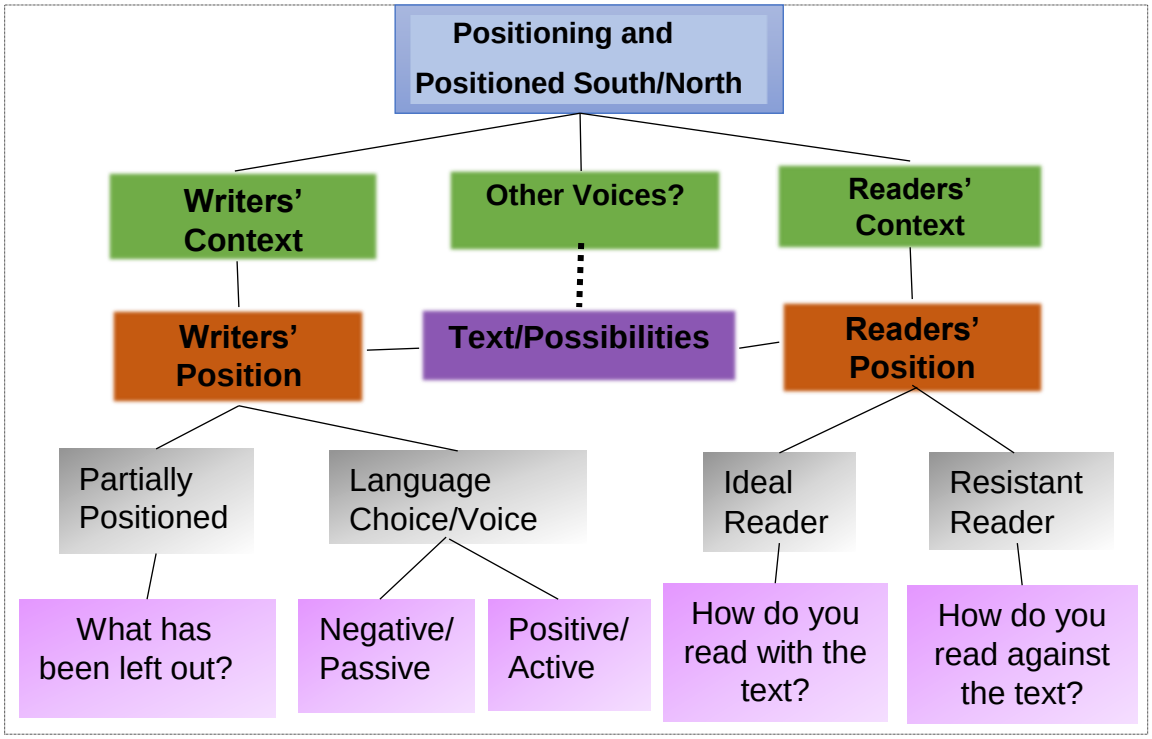

Figure 2 gives an example of a possible mind map of the Writer/Reader/Text connection.

Activity 1 – Reading text critically

First, the students would fill in the boxes in the mind map with the information they have been given and the conclusions they have arrived to after analysing their classmates' texts. They would be presented with three linguistic features (see *Contents 2.*) they could use to analyse texts. After reflecting on how to fill the mind map, they could make quicker connections on how to feel the active and passive voice boxes and look again to their classmates' language choices. The information will be completed with the *Contents 2.* on 'design' and 'redesign'.

It would be desirable that the students make the right connections between the process of critically analysing text and design (deconstructing the text on linguistic and design terms) and the creative process (reconstructing the text), engaging in the problem-solving task that is implicit in giving alternatives. If students

understand this connection, the process of doing CL would take a constructive approach that pursues a productive end instead of empty criticisms.

Another issue the students need to understand is that power is not intrinsically bad, provided it is used wisely to emancipate people and grant equal access. On the contrary, design can be powerful, but lacking in diversity and access it completely misses the point in terms of social change and can serve disempowering purposes that reproduce domination.

Figure 3 campaign created by Youth Against Aids (2018) New York.

Figure 4 Spanish HIV campaign Ministry of Health (1988).

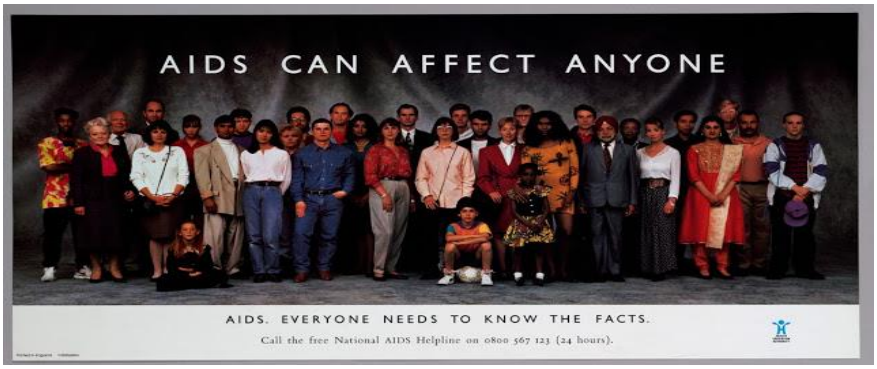

Figure 5 United Kingdom AIDS campaign (1987) drlopezheras.com.

*Figure 6 Frost*collective Ending HIV 2.0 campaign (2015) frostcollective.com.au.*

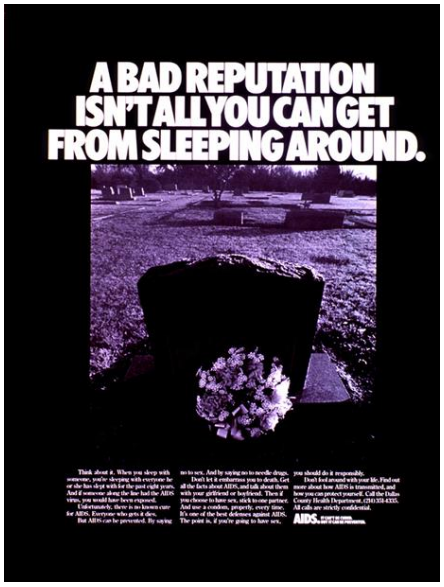

Figure 7 U.S.A. HIV campaign (198-) Dallas County.

Figure 8 HIV campaign by Do It London (2018) London.

Activity 2 – Can quality design empower people?

In this activity the students would be presented with six different HIV preventive campaigns and students will be asked to rate them according to their design (e.g. Is it the layout attractive to the eye? Is the message catchy? What do the images tell you? Do they support or cancel the text?) and in terms of tackling the issue from a responsible and well informed social and critical perspective (e.g. How is the text positioning us? Is the mood a statement/command/question? Does the text marginalise/stigmatise anyone?). The aim is that the students realise that it is possible to find a balance between a powerful design and an equally powerful message that is inclusive and keeps a critical perspective on a sensitive issue.

The students have three campaigns that meet all the standards both in terms of design and message *Fig. 4, 5* and *8;* two campaigns whose designs are good but are somehow problematic with their messages *Fig. 3* and 6; and one campaign that has a fairly poor design and the message is unethical and hideously intrusive *Fig. 7*. The variety gives them the opportunity to try the linguistic tools for analysis with modals and moods, as the texts position the reader in various ways. The students would be reminded to pay attention about context and history as well, two very important factors they have to take into account while doing CL.

After the activity they would be reminded of the importance of signs and abstract symbols to construct meaningful discourses and how time, history and context can completely change the way they are valued and, thus, interpreted.

For the following session they would need to bring a picture or an object that represents or symbolises their idea of education and write the reasons for their choice and a narration of their points of view on education, trying to use some of the linguistic devices they have seen (e.g. statements, passive constructions, modals, etc.). They can support their design with these linguistic choices together with the image/object they have chosen and how they structure their discourse. They would be encouraged to do some research if they do not find the inspiration, but the more original they can be in their reflections, the better.

In their journals, they would need to write a story about the South or the North, they would have not written without knowing all they already know about discourse, design, redesign and positioning and positioned writers and readers.

Session 3 – Sign Systems, Knowledge & Education

Contents 3. The students would be introduced to the following contents:

The Seven Building Tasks for an overview see Unit 3 of (Gee, 2010, pp. 84-148). In this session the teacher would need to introduce the students with:

Significance - The Significance Building Tool in *How to Do Discourse Analysis: A Toolkit* (J. P. Gee, 2010, pp. 92–96).

Sign system and Knowledge - The Sign Systems and Knowledge Building Tool in (Gee, 2010, pp. 135-143).

At the beginning of this session, the students would present their images/objects and related texts on education. The importance of signs and sign systems would be introduced by analysing how each of them has chosen a particular sign (e.g. a pile of books) to represent or symbolise an abstract concept (e.g. knowledge) to symbolise another concept (education) with its particular sign system (e.g. educational language). The teacher would try to promote relations between the students' lives and experiences and their position within the education system, which sign system and type of knowledge are represented by education, who gets access to this sign system and knowledge, how education is positioning the students and how it differs from country to country. There are many questions that can be ask about the topic and are worth considering by the students and the teacher.

Activity 1 – Rethinking education

The students would be asked to look at their classmates' representations of education, the pictures or objects they have chosen together with the texts explaining their reasons and views on education, and they would have to analyse their classmates' viewpoints considering all the points we have seen in the last sessions. For that they would be given the following questions:

- Look for adjectives your classmate has used to describe education. How is your classmate positioning herself/himself in relation to education? How is s/he trying to position you? What has been left out according to you in this position?
- Look at the context given by the image/object chosen and compare it with the text. Do they complement or cancel each other? Does the contrast create humour/the agreement ground the arguments?
- Does your knowledge of her/him affect your position? In which way/s?
- Does s/he use an active or a passive voice in relation to education? Is s/he acting on (doer) or acted upon (done-to) education? Is thus education an active or a passive activity? How can that affect her/his learning experience?
- What is the general text mood? Does it inform, question, command or offer?
- How is modality used? Is there certainty or uncertainty, obligation or willingness?
- What do you think of the design? Is it convincing? Does it express innovative or conservative ideas? Does it add something to your understanding of education? Would you redesign it? Why? How?
- What does your classmate find significant/insignificant about education? Which word choice or grammar devices does s/he use to express that?
- Can you detect any sign system that is being promoted or dismissed? Does the argument promote one an idea dismissing others'? Which are promoted/dismiss? Which beliefs does s/he hold on education? How is her/his identity within the educational domain reflected in the text?

The students would be asked to use the grammar from the linguistic devices they had already learnt. Because of the complexity of putting together all the analytical devices, they could first analyse one or two of the texts as a class-group with the teacher's guidance and divide them into smaller groups after they got the dynamics. This activity would take the rest of the session, so the teacher can monitor the process, explain again whatever may prove problematic and let the students enough time to practise.

At the end of the session, they would be asked to answer the following questions for the next session: In your opinion, what should education do to provide everyone with equal opportunities? Is treating everybody equally the same as allowing them equal opportunities?

Session 4 – Access, Domination & Inaccessible Languages

Content 4. The students would be introduced to the following contents:

Access in (Janks, 2009, p. 24).

At the beginning of this session, the teacher would let the students discuss the question posed at the end of *Session 3*, since in this session they will be introduce to access, which is at the centre of the problem education faces by claiming to try to grant equal opportunities for everyone with a standardised curriculum that treats all the students as if they came from the same backgrounds, had access to the same resources and had started under the same conditions. Education is unable to cope with diversity because it still far from including diversity, since this would mean to have a diverse curriculum and not a curriculum that imposes the dominant literacies and knowledges, the dominant discourses, the dominant set of cultural practices and, in general, what is considered to be the norm.

Activity 1 – Opening access

The first part of this activity is based on an activity created by Kerryn Dixon (Janks et al., 2013, pp. 60-61) but I have adapted/added some questions.

1) The students would write their language biography by answering these questions: What language did you learn to speak first? Why that language? Did you learn two languages simultaneously? Do you consider any of them as your 1st and 2nd language? Why? Which foreign language did you learnt first? Have you learnt a 2nd? How fluent are you in that/those language/s? Which language do you identify the most with? Which language makes you

feel more powerful: The language you speak with your family, the language you speak with your friends or the language you speak at school? Why?

Once they have written down their answers, they would go around the classroom, share their stories and find: 1. one person whose first language you cannot speak; 2. one person who speaks two languages fluently; 3. one person who learnt a 1st foreign language other than English; 4. one person who communicates with her/his family in a language that is not Spanish; 5. one person that feels more powerful speaking a language other than Spanish or English.

The students and the teacher will sit in a circle and share their answers. After they will be asked to discuss around the following question: Why do you think some languages are consider more important than other? Do you know UNESCO has a list of languages that are endangered? If not, they could do some research and find out how many languages the list has.

Activity 2- Language, Access and Power

The class would be divided into two groups. One half would be given the article 'Why this bilingual education ban should have been repealed long ago' (M. Carter, 2014), which deals with the ballot measure *Proposition 227* that was passed in California in 1998 to imposed restrictions on bilingual education. The other half is given the article 'Language at risk of dying out – the last two speakers aren't talking' (Tuckman, 2011), which deals with the indigenous language of Ayapaneco in Mexico, a language that only two people spoke at the moment the article was written, and they happened to not speak to each other. While the anecdote has a funny touch of irony, the reality behind it is much sadder and darker, with successive governments during the 20th century that banned indigenous languages at schools and punished those who dare to speak them.

After both groups have read the articles and made some research about the topics, they would explain the other groups the pattern of domination and denial of access to those who speak other languages which are not considered official. It is interesting for the students to discover how the discourse in Mexico during the 19th century still prevails in the U.S.A., trying to mask an act of oppressive domination as if it were a discourse for integration.

If the time does not allow, they could present their findings at the beginning of the following class. They would be asked to reflect around the following questions in their journals: Do you use the same type of language to speak to your family

and friends? How does the context affect the way you use the language? How many identities would you say one person has? How many identities do you think you can enact in your native language?

Session 5 – The Everyday Politics of Language & Identity

Contents 5. The students would be presented to the following contents:

Context in (Gee, pp. 6-8; 84-87).

Identity in (Gee, pp. 106-110).

Politics in (Gee, pp. 118-126).

At the beginning of the session students would have time to reflect on what we have been doing so far and express any doubts, problems or concerns they may have. To help them think about the goals implicit in the development of the skills needed to do CL, they would be given three features they can use to self-assess their progress (Bañón Hernández, 2018). To what extent am I able to:

- contextualise (context refers to all the information surrounding an issue or a communication act i.e. physical setting, shared (cultural/historical) knowledge, previous knowledge, implicit assumptions, etc. The better informed we are, and the more research we do, the easier would be to put the information into a context).
- analyse what is implicit (the tools they would be working with are designed to explain and analyse the implications saying things have to construct reality in a certain way that acts, in turn, upon the world. Remember, language do not just say things, but do things).
- do self-criticism and engage myself actively in the social debate (to be self-critic means, among other things, to admit whenever you do not have enough information or evidences to judge something; to be cautious when judging an issue and be aware of your own fallibility; to admit and recognise your own partiality and question your own ideas/ideology; to be able to imagine and listen to all the points of view; to hold accountable while being aware of the extent of your responsibilities; to actively engage in the learning process; to be able to support your beliefs with evidences, not with further beliefs; to be aware of the value and intellectual, material and human cost of information; to be able to differentiate between logically valid and invalid inferences.

To engage actively in the social debate means, among other things, to use the evidences with accuracy and impartiality; to be able to anticipate the possible consequences of other actions before you take decisions; to recognise that real social problems have more than one possible solution and these solutions may differ from each other in ways that makes it difficult to compare them in terms of a single-valued criterion; to be able to think about different alternative approaches to complex problems; to know the difference between winning an argument and defending a right position (notice the difference: a right position, not the right position); to differentiate what is social from what is personal; to be empathetic with those who are socially deprived or oppressed; to be able to recognise discourses of domination to avoid unconsciously enacting them; to be aware of your own limitations and that helping is not the same as bearing good intentions or having the will to help; to be critically constructive, not destructive, and build up alternative discourses that support your own view combining multiple voices and richness of intertextuality from previous discourses; to be aware of the context i.e. different contexts ask for different approaches; to be aware of other people's achievements who have fought for social justice and know the history and stories behind the social struggles; to be aware of your privileges and where you stand in relation to others; to be curious, non-conformist and informed about the world around you; to be aware that the fight for social justice is an everyday task and your behaviour and the discourse you use with your family, your group of friends, your community, in your school and the strangers you come across in your everyday life also matters and acts upon the world). There is a mixture of self-made questions and questions taken from Antonio Bañón Hernández's paper (Bañón Hernández, 2018).

These points could be discussed with the students by eliciting examples from them, which could lead to a productive discussion. This could introduce the *Contents 5.* of this session on context, identity and politics. Three constructs that are closely interrelated and can interfere with or modify each other.

Activity 1 – Working out context and identity

The students would listen to the voices off-screen of different people and they would try to guess their identities and context through the language being used, the intonation contour and patterns, the register, the ambient sound environment, etc. Once students have guessed they would be revealed the content of the videos so they can check whether their guesses were accurate or not, and why.

The students' abilities could be occasionally challenged by presenting unexpected takes on identities i.e. former president Obama acting on a comedy sketch in the White House Correspondent's dinner with actor Keegan Michael-Key, joking at the sign-language interpreter's controversy that sparked at the time because of the mistakes the interpreter did in a press conference (The Daily Conversation, 2015).

Activity 2 – Positioning Identities[4]

The students would be given a real interview with a middle-school girl with Hispanic origins named Maria, and they would have to analyse the discourse of Maria to see how she is positioning herself by positioning her Hispanic community with a discourse that serves as a perfect example of cultural assimilation, since the girl blames her Hispanic community members for their lack of educational resources. She describes them in differentiated and standardised terms: "Like Hispanic people don't, don't/ some of the Hispanic people don't like go to college and stuff like that//". The text is perfect for the students to use the tools they have been learning so far to do CL, as it is a typical discourse of domination, that deals with aspects of access to education, race, discrimination, identity, context, politics, etc., where the voice of the Hispanic girl has been assimilated by the privileged mainstream white discourse and more revealing than her description of the Hispanic community, is the contrast she makes when describing the white community, making assumptions in their favour: "So white people don't, don't think like that // They want to get an education / they want to have a good / their life //". It is interesting who she stops when she is about to utter something "they want to have a good" and then concludes "their life". She is obviously going to say, "a good life", but then something makes her stop and end the sentence in an awkward way. The students can also be guided to see how while describing white

[4] The transcript of this interview can be found in Appendix 1.

people's identities as "wanting a good life" she is at the same time positioning her Hispanic community's identity, as it begs the question, is she implying Hispanic people do not want a good life?

I have taken this text from James Paul Gee's book (2010, p. 113) *How to Do Discourse Analysis: A Toolkit* and adapted or created other question for the students.

If the students struggle with text analysis, a good option could be using the scaffolding technique 'The Guided Comprehension Direct Instruction Method' created by McLaughlin (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2004). Basically, the method consists on the teacher reading aloud the text and making her/his thought processes to do CL evident for the students, in a sort of stream-of-consciousness reading. For instance, as I have described some passages above, but with a complete explanation of how I arrive at the conclusions, focusing on the different strategies one by one.

In the following session we will look at another text that has to do with education and deals directly with issues of marginalisation, access, power and oppression. The text is a talk on TEDx, the students will be asked to watch before the next session and take notes about their first impressions in their journals.

Session 6 – Constructing meaning and reality through grammar

Contents 6. The students would be introduced to the following contents:

Key Linguistic Features for Analysis of the Text 2 in (Janks, 2009, p.74).

Nominalisation: i.e. achieved by turning a verb into a noun and, therefore, the process is turned into a thing without participants, tense, modality or agents.

Lexicalisation/Overlexicalisation: i.e. a typically sexist lexicalisation of women would describe them as passive in relation to men, more emotional, less rational and so on. An overlexicalisation is, in a way, a consequence of lexicalisation, such as equating weak to women, as being essentially attached to one another.

Euphemism: i.e. to use words such as 'traditional' to introduce "traditional beliefs thought homosexuality to be an illness", when, in fact, what is implicit is that these were 'past' homophobic belief.

Pronouns: i.e. **exclusive 'we'** - with reference to pronouns, a term used (in contrast with inclusive) to refer to a first-person role where the addressee is not included along with the speaker, e.g. exclusive we = me and others but not you"

(Crystal, 2008, p. 177). **Inclusive 'we'** - with reference to pronouns, inclusive is used (in contrast with exclusive) to refer to a first-person role where the speaker and addressee are both included, e.g. we = 'me and you' or 'me and others and you'. (2008, p. 239)

Us and **them** are normally used to create discourses and narratives of division, pointing to one of the sides as the 'good ones' and the other side as the 'bad ones', or one side as belonging and the other side as alien i.e. immigration vs. nationals.

Generic **'he'** used to include **'she'** (Janks, 2009, p.74)

Deixis: Common **deictics** (pointing words) are words that fall in the category of **person** (I/me, you, she/her, he/him, we/us, they/them), **place** (here/there, this/that) and **time** (now/then, yesterday/today). They are also be referred to as "shifters" because their meaning relies upon the context in which they are uttered, they have a relational meaning (Gee, 2010, pp. 8-9).

The use of the **definite article 'the'** and the **indefinite article 'a'** can be consider in this category too, as its used is also embedded with context i.e. compare the difference between "A woman called this morning asking for you", and "The woman called this morning asking for you". The latter implies shared knowledge the former does not.

Activity 1 – Find the linguistic feature

The students would be given a handout with sentences or small paragraphs containing the linguistic features they have just learnt, and they would need to find them and rewrite the sentence to achieve a different result i.e. if they find an overlexicalisation they would have to redesign the paragraph to avoid, for instance, making men a synonymous of tough.

Activity 2 – CL Practice

The students were supposed watched the video *Growing Roses in Concrete*, a TEDx Talk performed by Jeff Duncan-Andrade (TEDx Talks, 2011), who is a radical educator and exposes the injustice behind racial segregation and how it is still a very modern issue, with young people living in deprived urban areas in U.S. that suffer from P.T.S.D. because of the degree of violence they are exposed to. Duncan-Andrade also exposes the hypocrisy of institutions and powers that do not want to admit the connection between academic failure and life conditions and explains how they help a group of young people from East Oakland High

School by giving them an education and resources that was adapted to their situation. They use a looping system that allows them to stay with those students for several years, forming cohorts of students and how these students' conditions have drastically improved from receiving the education and attention they needed. The students would be given the transcript and would analyse Duncan-Andrade's talk, reflecting on his work and how relates to power inequities, access, identity, institutional oppression, etc.

For the next session the students would be ask to look at Harvard University's website, especially at one section of admission called 'What we look for', taking notes of the language and trying to describe what type of language the University uses to describe the features of its candidates and how is that building the University's identity while enacting those of the students. They can use the tools they have learnt so far to describe how the University's discourse is positioning the reader who visits the website.

Session 7 – Recapitulation 1

These two last sessions would be devoted to securing all the concepts they have been learning so far and try to connect them in a comprehensive manner, since most of them are interrelated in some way or another i.e. context relates to practically all the other concepts and deixis is one of the linguistic devices to find out where the context is missing, or being assumed.

Activity 1 – Harvard at the spot of analysis

During this session we would carry on looking at the website of Harvard University. In the section I mentioned above 'What we look for', the students can already detect an exclusive 'we' in the title. But it is interesting to see how Harvard describes what they are looking for in the admissions department by posing a series of questions, which is a clever move, as they are indirectly telling you what it is but, at the same time, they are asking the student to define it themselves. i.e. "How have you used your time?" ("What We Look For | Harvard College," 2019). This question sets the standard they expect from their students, as they do not even specify 'during school'. I think to rephrase that question in absolute terms is kind of daunting giving the age of the applicants.

For the next session they would be asked to read a short essay written by Helen Vendler (Vendler, 2019), a former member of the Faculty Standing

Committee on Admissions and professor of English at Arthur Kingsley Porter University, since we would analyse the text in the following session.

Session 8 – Recapitulation 2

This session is meant to take up the recapitulation from last session. At the beginning of the session, the students together with the teacher could create another mind map or another type of visual representation, so the information is organised and handy.

Activity – 1 The scientific student vs. the artistic soul

The students together with the teacher would look at Vendler's essay *Valuing the Creative & Reflective* (Vendler, 2019). Before the essay, someone from the Admissions department introduces Vendler's essay, which is described as an inspirational reminder for the members Harvard's Committee of Admissions, who need to remember that Harvard also has to be a cultural space where creative sensibilities find their home.

The essay is interesting on an analytical level because it creates a clear binary between the "scientific" student together with those students that are good at sports in contrast to the "creative" student, who, in Vendler's depiction, is introspective, not prompted to social life and, in general terms, presented as a romantic soul from the XIX century, more than a normal student who happens to be talented for the arts. Therefore, the text is sort of explicit in her stereotyped and quasi-mythical depiction, which is kind of striking for an English professor of an elite University. They would go over the text together with the teacher and use the mind map to do the critical analysis. The class could be divided into four groups and each group assigned a set of tools to apply on the essay.

This project's sample of teaching intervention ends here. In the following section the reader will be provided with a discussion on the main strengths and weaknesses of the project and the feasibility of its implementation, as well as some alternative paths for action.

5. PROJECT'S DISCUSSION

This project faces, first and foremost, the challenge of being an ongoing process and, as much research as it has been done, there is the pressing realisation that there is still much more work and research to be done. Parallel to this realisation, the fact is that CL has only been noticed outside the realm of

English-speaking countries at the beginning of the 21st century, so European teachers that are interested in implementing this approach need to rely heavily on research done, and based on the beliefs and practices of English speaking countries (Fajardo, 2015). This is not to say that the research done in these countries is not valuable or useful, on the contrary, it was while reading on these practices and discovering a whole new set of theorists and committed professionals that the project took its form. The issue of the research location is not a matter of setting but, being an approach that draws greatly from interacting with the students' contexts and their ecologies, had an example at a national level been found, it would have proved illuminating. Besides, as it has been noticed, the research done in EFL is rare (Ko, 2013) and, generally, the feeling that there is not a clear cut approach the teachers can take has created ambivalent position within the teaching professionals who have raise a number of concerns about the appropriateness or its applicability because of the number of assumptions being made (Fajardo, 2015). It is true that the relationship between the discourse, as a powerful tool for representations, and the material reality of the outside world is a complex conundrum not every teacher is happy to embrace. However, as Luke points out, this should not be regarded so much as a problem or theoretical flaw but as a starting and overall aim for teaching and learning (Luke, 2012). Nevertheless, it is a factor it must be consider, because the resistance on the part of the teachers it may be a problem this project could face. Similarly, the student may not always be receptive to its application, either because they do not want to engage in a critical analysis which assumes an unfair division of power, because of the unusual demands the techniques to do DA entail, or because they prefer a more traditional learning approach, which just imply decoding reading and listening (Abednia & Izadinia, 2013; Alford, 2001; Fajardo, 2015). Furthermore, even if they are willing to engage in the process, the lack of background knowledge may prove problematic, as it is a prerequisite for the learners to make sense of the intended meaning of the text (Alford, 2001). Finally, two further aspects that could pose problems would be the lack of time to learn a series of techniques that are time consuming, because it would be essential to maximise the students' opportunities to practise and develop their abilities, and the teachers' preparation to use those tools that, although are not extremely complicated, need to be applied with a degree of expertise and coherence. In any

case, these are some aspects to take into consideration to plan some possible lines of action such as organising training course for the teachers or carefully planning the sessions, so there is time not just to learn the abilities but to develop an attitude towards the world that predispose them to be constructively critical and do not take anything for granted.

All that being said, CL has a great potential to create a rich learning environment where the students can also find their own voices on complex matters, become aware of the effort and thoughtful processes that are implicit in a good argument, appreciate the value information has and not only know what is ethically right, but know how to defend it and defend themselves from bigotry. CL is based on the premise that there are a number of social injustices that need to be eradicated. But it is also based on the premise that every individual has the need to be heard and to feel they belong to a community, and that every human being has a story behind that deserves to be told, and that those stories form bigger stories, stories of communities, stories of villages, cities and countries, and those stories are the material with which history is being made, even if it is not the material that is being told. CL is not the solution for every evil that solace humanity, but it could be a good starting point to create the basis of mutual understanding and to give the students a space to question authority and to question themselves to enact transformation and social change.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This project started with the aim of finding a link between identity and language learning. My intuition was that, because language is so connected to our identity formation, there had to be something in the research that would allow me to develop my final project on a topic of my interest. Indeed, even though is a fairly recent field of study, I found a great deal of articles discussing the issue that grabbed my attention and talked about interesting constructs such as *investment* and *imagine communities* (Kanno & Norton, 2003). I found these topics very interesting, but at some point, I realised that I wanted to do something with a practical application and the issue of identity was too theory-based to yield a teaching intervention.

So, I turned to the issue of minorities, since it was related to identity, it had a social application and I enjoy studying theories about gender, race, sexuality, or any other issue that challenges hegemonic or white heteronormative discourses. The idea was to use minorities discourses in the English sessions to both be inclusive and draw from those issues that rarely make it into the classrooms. That is not to say, that these topics are never discussed in the classrooms, but unfortunately, this depends largely on the openness and good heart of the teacher and her/his ability to treat these issues in a natural manner or the aportations of non-governmental organisations, which labour deserves all the merits, but the visibility they give to certain topics is limited because they need to be politically correct if they are supposed to continue their endeavours. Even at this level of correctness, if words such as *transgender* or anything *queer* that surpasses the boundaries of the "acceptable" gay couple enters the picture, the right-thinking people would raise their voices in opposition to protect their children from indoctrination. The point of my digression is that, as Foucault claims (Foucault, 1992), in every period of history there are those right-thinking people who try to seize the discourse and decide who can speak and who cannot, what can be said and what cannot. And the problem is they continue winning the battle more often than not, since, such is their wrath, that they silence any discourse that is more reasonable than theirs and, thus, do not push to tilt the balance. Because Foucault knew the human psyche, he argued that the prohibitions people threw into discourse were normal, because they reveal the relationship discourse has with desire and power, since discourse not only manifests or hides the desire, but it is the object of desire itself. No wonder why discourse, according to Foucault, is the power to be seized (Foucault, 1992, p. 6).

Similarly, as teachers, we have the voice of the censor whispering into our ears and telling us which discourses are appropriate for the students and which are taboo and, because of fear of the wrath of the right-thinking people being directed to us, we end up being cautious and remaining silent, such is our fear of the right-thinking people's wrath. And I ask the reader to allow my digression again, because I am about to arrive to the nitty-gritty of my point. My choice of the minorities' discourse was a form to counteract the right-thinking people's discourse, but it was somehow too broad and disconnected from my subject

matter, so I had to keep thinking how I could combine the social with the language requirements by using the discourse as a cohesive device.

Upon discussing it with my tutor, at some point appeared the analysis of the discourse, so I started to think of a methodology which had enough theoretical glue to bind all those things together. My thoughts were directed to try something in the line of inquiry-based methodologies. Curiously enough, even when I had already all the pieces of the puzzle, I was still unable to think of CDA as such. It was while reading on a theory we had barely look at during the Master's (this bares no criticism), Kumaravadivelu's postmethodology (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, 2001), that I suddenly was able to start putting a name to my project. After that, I started to look into CDA, and it was not long until I came across CL and realised that was what I had been looking for all this time. At the beginning, Kumaravadivelu's postmethod and identity theories still featured in my project, but I had to narrowed it down for the purpose of this project until it became what it is now.

The underlaying message of my story is that, as I recall my progress, it allows me to identify and describe the competencies and learning outcomes I have acquired during this year and with my final project. In a sense, this has been a semi-conscious process, in which I have succeeded in aligning my volitions and beliefs on pedagogy with the theory that matches them by following the thread of knowledge (previous and acquired) until I put all the pieces together. This is the proof that it has been a difficult and tentative process, in which, although I was able to regulate my learning process, I was not sure of what I was doing until very recently. Although I am telling the story as if I had a sort of epiphany, it is precisely because epiphanies just happen when the hard work has already been done that enables your mind to work out the connections that lead to realisation. The truth is that I had no false moves once I had decided on what was my driving force. I had been able to create a curriculum design, even if still clumsily, that agrees with my beliefs and desires about education and what I think education should be. Because for me, education is mainly a social act and not a social service, there is no service in education but for those who want to put their hands on it, but education is a right and no right should be a service that is a further form that tries to seize the discourse, that tries to control knowledge, that decides who has access and what counts as literate. The question is, where is learning when there

is no transformation? Where is learning in standardised tests? Who decides on what counts as knowledge and who benefits from that? I have found no theory. I have found no methodology. What I have found above all, is a group of people that shares my beliefs on education and, as it happens with most things, they had already developed those thoughts in a powerful way and there is not teaching here, but there is leaning. Learning manifests itself as an act of love and determination, as anything that really matters in life does. Standardise tests bare no love, no true determination and they are means of oppression or, how can it be possible that learning creates such stress and anxiety? Standardise tests bare no learning. Learning is sharing, sharing the thrill of transformation, sharing is an act of love.

> As democracy is increasingly reduced to an empty shell and the carceral state looms heavy on the twenty-first century horizon, the commodity form penetrates all aspects of daily life, shaping the very nature of how young people think, act, and desire, and marking them as the epicenter of consumer culture. And it is precisely this violence against children as part of an attempt to universalize the hyperindividual isolated subject of consumption that is one of the most neglected aspects of the study of the politics of neoliberalism, commodification, and disposability (Giroux, 2009, p. 35).

Learning can be painful, but provided there is transformation, it will remain as an act of love, such as Giroux's. Giroux's words are painful, but they do not contain the right-thinking people's wrath. Giroux writes from the compassion of whom, having lived most of his life, sees others' lives being enfranchised, submitting to power while thinking there are in power. Giroux writes from the desolation of whom, upon seeing the ruthlessness of the human species, throws a call for action to summon desolation – to summon compassion – to summon transformation – to summon love.

Giroux throws a call for resistance to summon Freire – to summon anger – to summon the radicals – to summon consciousness – to summon transformation – to summon love.

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8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Transcript of an interview used in Session 5 Act. 2, taken from (J. P. Gee, 2010, p. 113).

1. Because like white people get more education //

2. Like Hispanic people don't, don't / some of the Hispanic don't like go to college and stuff like that //

3. And, you know, just, the white people just like / they like to, they

want a future //

4. You know they –

5. Some, some Hispanic and stuff they, they just –

6. I'm Hispanic but I'm saying –

7. Some um, they just like, like to hang around / they don't want to

go to school / they don't you know //

8. So white people don't, don't think like that //

9. They want to get an education / they want to have a good / their life //

10. And they really don't care what people say / like if they make fun of em //

11. Like ''gringos'' and stuff like that //

12. They don't, they don't care / they just do their work and then, they see after / they're like, they're married / and they have their professions and stuff made, / then, let's see who's gonna like, be better //

13. Maybe the Hispanic boy that said that you gonna / that like you're a nerd or something //

14. Probably in the streets looking for sh, for money and stuff like that / sick / and you have a house / you have your profession / you got

money //

15. So –

Questions

1. What sort of identity is Maria building for herself, Hispanics, and whites?

2. Earlier in the interview Maria has said she thinks whites are smarter than Hispanics. She goes on to say:

They're just smart // ((slight laugh))

I think they were born smart //

There's something like, their moms or something they give em a little

piece of smart or something // (slight laugh))

so they'll be smart //

How does what Maria says here fit with the way she treats identity in the data above?

3. What tensions or contradictions are present in the ways in which Maria is building identities for herself, Hispanics, and whites?

4. Maria talks little here directly about herself. How does this affect the identity or sense of self we as listeners attribute to her? What is the role of ''I'm Hispanic but I'm saying –''?

5. The interviewer was a white woman. Do you think this played a role in what Maria said? Why, or why not?